

youth prays...



**GOD**  
**answers**

by Glenn A. Coon

# YOUTH PRAYS—GOD ANSWERS

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Roan Mountain, Tenn. 37687

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## DEDICATION

To our youth everywhere, and to all  
who are engaged in training them to  
be soul-winners through the medium  
of prayer, this work is affectionately  
dedicated.

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We wish here to express our appreciation to these and all others who have contributed to making this work possible.

The Author.

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## P R E F A C E

### What Is The Prayer of Reception?

There is no such term as "The Prayer of Reception" to be found in the Bible or any other work, so far as we know, except our own lessons and books.

We use this term to distinguish this particular type of prayer from other types of prayer. For instance, there is the prayer of commitment. This prayer commits the answer to the Lord. This prayer says, "If it be Thy will," then do so and so for me, or for another. But the prayer of reception being based on any one of the 3,573 Bible promises, does not say, "if it be Thy will, forgive my sins which I have confessed to Thee", because God has definitely promised in I John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

The prayer of reception does not say, "Dear Lord, although I have confessed my sins, and fulfilled the conditions, yet if it be Thy will, give me the wisdom I need", because God has already promised, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind

and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord." James 1:5-7.

Therefore, the prayer of reception is based on claiming a Bible promise; for in this type of prayer, "We must ask for the things that He has promised."--Education, p. 258. Also in this type of prayer, we have the assurance, "The conditions met, the promise is unequivocal."--Ibid.

The author of the book "Education" quotes Mark 11:24 before the statement, "We must ask for the things that He has promised." So the full quotation is as follows: "In the prayer of faith there is a divine science; it is a science that everyone who would make his life-work a success must understand. Christ says, 'What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.' Mark 11:24. He makes it plain that our asking must be according to God's will; we must ask for the things that He has promised, and whatever we receive must be used in doing His will. The conditions met, the promise is unequivocal."--Education, pp. 257, 258.

"Believe that ye receive" is the basis of the prayer of reception. We have three wonderful and astonishing quotations from our favorite author which build on this Scripture. They teach us that we have a perfect right to offer a prayer of reception in the present perfect tense. They follow:

1. "... for any gift He has promised, we may ask; then we are to believe that we receive, and return thanks to God that we have received."--Id., p. 258.

2. "So we may ask for these blessings, and believe that we receive them, and thank God that we have received them."--Steps to Christ, p. 51 (Army and Navy Edition),

3. "We are to trust in His promises.

When we come to Him in faith, every petition enters the heart of God. When we have asked for His blessing, we should believe that we receive it, and thank Him that we have received it."—The Desire of Ages, p. 200.

In both the books, "Steps to Christ" and "The Desire of Ages" the author put the word "have" in italics for emphasis. This agrees with the beloved disciple John who cried out as the Holy Spirit burned in his heart: "We know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him." I John 5:15. This disciple was not alone in this divine unction. The gospel writer Matthew heard Jesus Himself declare, "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." Matthew 21:22.

For years these, and other similar statements of Scripture, were fuzzy to us, until we came to learn that this kind of receiving prayer—the prayer of reception—is based on claiming Bible promises; for Jesus made clear: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." John 15:7. It was in this connection that Jesus promised, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you . . . ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." John 16:23,24. Therefore, the kind of prayer we are dealing with mainly in this book—the prayer of reception—is based on claiming specific Bible promises, after fulfilling their conditions.

The author of the book "Education" makes this very clear when the following statements are made: "How to exercise faith should be made very plain. To every promise of God there are conditions. If we are willing to do His will, all His strength is ours. Whatever gift He promises, is in the promise itself. 'The seed is the word of God.' Luke 8:11. As surely as the oak is in the acorn,

so surely is the gift of God in His promise. If we receive the promise, we have the gift."—Education, p. 253.

Again and again the author of the book "Education" emphasizes that this kind of prayer is based on claiming a Bible promise: "For pardon of sin, for the Holy Spirit, for a Christlike temper, for wisdom and strength to do His work, for any gift He has promised, we may ask; then we are to believe that we receive, and return thanks to God that we have received."—Id., p. 258.

"We need look for no outward evidence of the blessing. The gift is in the promise, and we may go about our work assured that what God has promised He is able to perform, and that the gift, which we already possess, will be realized when we need it most."—Ibid.

This book, therefore, is written to encourage our faith as we claim Bible promises, having first fulfilled their simple conditions, and having determined that the answers to our prayers will all be used unselfishly to advance the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ in the earth.

The author of this book strongly urges the reader to secure his ten lessons on "The Prayer of Reception". Also "The Study Guide to the Prayer of Reception", a 200 page book; and "The A B C's of Bible Prayer" containing twelve sermons by the author. These deal thoroughly, though not exhaustively, with the "divine science" of claiming Bible promises. We also suggest you secure our book "God's Promises Solve My Problems", a 320 page, hard cover book of classified promises for almost every imaginable time of need. You may secure them either through your Book and Bible House, or directly from G. A. Coon, Route 1, Roan Mountain, Tenn. 37687. (\$3.50 each.) The book "Youth Prays—God Answers" is intended primarily to stimulate the faith of those who

read, to go farther with God and find a fullness in Christ never before experienced.

Because some of the experiences we relate in this book border on the fantastic, we want our readers to know that every chapter is true. Every experience is factual—not a mere composite. Names and places have been, in some instances, substituted, to keep confidences, or for other important reasons. The conversational quotes are not intended to give a verbatim, word-for-word reproduction, but are as nearly the exact words and thoughts expressed as veracity can make them.

What you read here has been checked, and in some cases double checked, to make sure of its truthfulness. What God has done for others, He can do for you!

Much of the emphases in the quotations are our own.

The Author.

## F O R E W O R D

### "Answers Like Dominos"

I was seated in the office of one of the leaders of our church, discussing the manuscript I had placed in his hand. What is now titled "Youth Prays—God Answers" was originally titled "The Prayer of Reception".

I was charmed as this man of God shared one personal experience after another of prayer answers which he had received from the hand of God immediately after reading our manuscript. I will give you only a brief sketch from memory of what he shared with me that day.

He said, "Glenn, my wife and I read your manuscript together as we traveled across the continent. As you know, we had received a call to the General Conference, and had listed our home on the West Coast for sale. We were unable to purchase a home in the Takoma Park area until we sold our home in the West. The real estate broker had announced, that, the market being what it was, he could not promise to sell the house in the foreseeable future, and would therefore release us from the listing contract since we were in an emergency. We had to settle in the Takoma Park area before I could meet over-seas appointments already set up. These appointments would keep me away for months. We recognized

that we could not be out of the States for these many months without having first sold our home in the West.

"So in this critical situation in which we found ourselves, we decided to follow minutely the science of prayer as outlined in your manuscript. I went to Takoma Park to take care of pressing problems connected with my new work, and my wife returned to the West.

"In a matter of about three days, the house had sold. I was notified to return immediately and sign the sales contract. From then on, answers came thick and fast. We were able to meet appointments like clock-work. So I know this science really works."

With a holy joy he exclaimed, "Glenn, we did not receive just one or two answers to prayer. Actually, the answers came like dominos." Then he opened one of our favorite books entitled "Steps to Christ," by E. G. White, and read the following statement: "So we may ask for these blessings, and believe that we receive them, and thank God that we have received them." p. 51 (Army and Navy Edition).

This book, together with the ten lessons and their "Study Guide" on "The Prayer of Reception", constitute what we term "a pilot program." During the coming months we hope to smooth out any wrinkles in all of these works and then perhaps publish all through one of our publishing houses. In the mean time we solicit any additional instruction, criticism, or material which you, the reader, feel might strengthen this program.

## INTRODUCTION

### God Wanted This Book Written

"Three weeks ago," began a lady whom we shall call Mrs. Nyder, "I had lost all hope. My faith had grown weak, and I was miserable. I was ready to give up everything. The problems of life were crushing me! I was caving in!

"Then you came. You brought God's message to my needy soul. As the meetings progressed, faith began to spring up anew in my breast, and hope's lamp was lighted. Now I am happy in Jesus. Everything has changed. I owe it all to you as God's instrument.

"When I heard the other day that you were praying for a financial loan on the book you were ready to send to press, I talked to the Lord about whether I should be a part of your project. I finally promised Him that if, by the following evening when I went to the meeting, you did not have the money, I myself would take my money out of savings and loan it to you for the publication of the book."

And that is exactly what happened. We had gone to the church on the night referred to. As I walked into the vestibule, my wife, who had preceded me by a few moments, called to me and whispered, "There is someone here who wants to see you about making a loan on the book."

I was excited! thrilled! I got the name and had the song leader page her for me. Within a matter of moments, Mrs. Nyder and I met, and I heard her make this heaven-inspired offer:

"I want to loan you part of the money needed

for the publishing of your book," Mrs. Nyder began. Later, when my wife and I went to visit Mrs. Nyder, we learned that she was taking her last penny out of savings that she might be a part of this soul-winning project--the publication of "YOUTH PRAYS--GOD ANSWERS".

To us, it is delightfully refreshing to trace events from as far back as seven or eight months, when my wife and I were asking God to show us where He wanted us to hold meetings during the fall, winter and spring of 1967-1968. The promises we often claim for guidance as we look forward to the future are:

Isaiah 42:16: "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not."

Proverbs 3:5, 6: "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

Psalms 32:8: "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye."

James 1:5: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

As we were asking, believing and claiming some of these precious promises last fall, we felt impressed to make a long distance telephone call. It was to St. Helena, California, the area where Mrs. Nyder lives. Of course we never dreamed at that time that there was a Mrs. Nyder there. But God knew all the time. He knew that Mrs. Nyder, and other discouraged hearts, needed a message of assurance that God wants to instruct every soul in the way he should go. God wants to guide everyone with His eye. He is eager to give wisdom to His troubled children.

As we called St. Helena we talked with our

old-time friends, Pastor and Mrs. Harold Brown. We explained to them that the president of the Northern California Conference had been wanting us to come to his field for revival services; that on several occasions he had contacted us, but up to now we had been unable to respond to his invitation. However, we had promised him that should we be able to come at a future date, we would let him know. So now we were calling our good friends the Browns, so they in turn would notify the pastor of the St. Helena church—who had years before invited us for a series of meetings with him—that we were now available. Thus one event led to another, and now we were holding the long-planned meetings in the St. Helena church.

It is thrilling to us to ponder how the very lady, Mrs. Nyder, who had been so discouraged, was to be the one who would loan us a sizeable sum of several thousand dollars for the publication of the book "YOUTH PRAYS--GOD ANSWERS"! (May we add parenthetically here that when Mrs. Nyder offered to loan the money to us, we immediately offered in turn to give her, not merely our note, but also security, in the form of a Deed of Trust to some property we own which is worth more than the money she has so kindly loaned us.)

"I do not want any security," replied Mrs. Nyder, almost insulted that we should offer it. But then as we explained to her that in case anything should happen to my wife and me, she should be protected, she understood and permitted us to do business in a business-like way.

Another interesting fact we learned was that, before Mrs. Nyder was impressed by the Holy Spirit to be a part of our project in the publication of "YOUTH PRAYS--GOD ANSWERS", she had planned to take a much-needed vacation with her elderly mother. But now all the money saved for that purpose was being loaned—even the half dollars and quarter dollars she had so carefully stored away in two little cans.



When we exclaimed that we hesitated to accept her vacation money, Mrs. Nyder answered with a sweet and confident smile, "That is all right. God will take care of that in His own way."

Not merely was the loan of Mrs. Nyder anticipated by our heavenly Father long months before we met her, but other miracles by which we were able to publish "YOUTH PRAYS—GOD ANSWERS", along with a companion book "STUDY GUIDE TO THE PRAYER OF RECEPTION", were equally planned for in advance by our Lord.

Let us share with you some of these providences so you will know, with us, that God wanted this book published. The first relates to our securing a Cadillac car, which in turn made it possible for us to sell our V.W. for enough more cash so that we were able to mail another \$1,350 to the publishers. This is how the Lord worked it out:

Dr. Alvin Dougan, who with his charming wife had invited us to be their guests in their private upstairs apartment during our Napa and St. Helena series of meetings, asked me one day if I would be willing to go and visit a patient or two of his down in Oakland—one patient at least, being a rather famous personality.

With a young alcoholic friend, whom we shall call Jim Tonwag, Dr. Dougan and myself, we started for Oakland. We made the trip in Dr. Dougan's 1954 Cadillac. We had not gone very far before I began to admire this car—almost mint perfect. I had felt for some time that it was not fair for me to use my V.W. Variant for such heavy duty work as to haul a trailer around. Yet I could not, I felt, afford a new larger car. But here was an old car, yet a big one and a good one. I thought out loud, "If only I had a car just like this, it would satisfy my needs in our evangelistic travels." Dr. Dougan later told a friend that he overheard me, while riding on that trip, praying, "Dear Lord,

please give me a car just like this one."

As Dr. Dougan, Jim and I arrived at the Merritt Hospital in Oakland, we made the visits and returned to his car. Just as we were ready to move out of the parking area, we spied a 1954 Cadillac, driven by an eighty-four-year-old gentleman, Mr. Rosenberg.

"Excuse me, Dr. Dougan," I exclaimed, "but let me out for a moment." I heard Dr. Dougan and Jim laughing at me as I ran over to the elderly gentleman and his 1954 Cadillac.

"Is this the Cadillac that was for sale?" I inquired pleasantly.

Not expecting to hear such words from a total stranger, Mr. Rosenberg sort of growled back, "No!" His tone had a finality that should have caused me to have uttered a little apology and run back to the car I was supposed to be in all the while.

But I could not apologize. Something spurred me on and I asked pleasantly again: "Would you consider selling it?"

With a somewhat more pleasant tone in his voice the elderly gentleman asked, "What will you give me for it?"

Very nobly I replied: "I wouldn't think of placing a value on your property."

As if persuing a new, yet pleasant train of thought, the gentleman continued, "Would you give me \$500 for it?"

"Could I have your name and address, please sir?" I inquired, stating that we would call on him later. So I jotted down the information—Mr. William Rosenberg, 1850 Alice St., Oakland, California.

On our return trip to Napa, Dr. Dougan and Jim and I talked about this quick answer to prayer. We decided that since this was Friday afternoon it might run us too close to the Sabbath hours to visit the elderly gentleman that day, so the Doctor volunteered to take us down the following Sunday.

Before we started Sunday, Dr. Dougan, himself a knightly gentleman, called Mr. Rosenberg, asking if Sunday would be satisfactory, or whether any such business would interfere with any religious principles. Receiving a negative reply to the latter question, we were on our way to Alice Street and a multimillion dollar retirement home for Senior Citizens. We walked into this plush home, inquired for Mr. Rosenberg, and came to the conclusion that any car that was owned by an occupant of this palatial home must be in almost perfect condition.

The question in our minds before we made the trip was whether the car would be worth the full \$500. Jim had suggested we cut the gentleman down to \$350 or perhaps \$400.

To this I replied, "Jim, we must take our religion into our business. We must practice the Golden Rule. If the car, without doubt, is worth the \$500, then we should, without doubt pay that sum. If the car is not worth this amount, then that is a different matter. I mention this because sometimes we expect God to answer our prayers without realizing that there are conditions to answered prayer, and one of these conditions is that we practice the Golden Rule.

Jim was not a professed Christian. In fact, before we made the trip to Oakland that Sunday, Jim, Dr. Dougan and I had gone to look at another old Cadillac right near the doctor's home in Napa. It was priced at \$250. Jim, a one-time car salesman himself, decided that he would show us how to get the price of the car down. So as we looked at

this old car Saturday night, Jim suggested to the gas station operator that he check the compression on the car, and then give a false report to the owner. By so doing the owner would doubtless accept a lesser figure for his car as the test would prove it not worth the asking price.

Later I explained to Jim that a man of the world might feel that this is a shrewd way of doing business, but it has no part in the Christian's business dealing. "The Golden Rule forbids it, Jim," I began kindly. "I am not chiding you for your actions. I am merely explaining to you that as a Christian I could not resort to these methods. Neither will I Jew down the old gentleman tomorrow on his 1954 Cadillac if it proves to be worth the price he is asking." Jim gave grudging assent, but in his heart I am sure he felt I was too naive.

The 1954 Cadillac proved to be almost mint perfect. The paint, the chrome, the tires, the motor, the interior—everything about it, even the radio, was almost perfect.

A day or two later I told one of the pastors where we had meetings that I had purchased a 1954 Cadillac in answer to prayer.

He teasingly replied, "You will not be able to sell your Volkswagen, and then you will probably be forced to take a substantial loss on the Cadillac!"

But not so. The V.W. sold for a good price. And the very day it sold we mailed through to the publishers all the cash received for the car which was exactly the amount the publishers required.

Dr. Dougan enjoys relating this miracle experience to his patients. I have related it twice in as many churches. I desired our people to know that what our favorite author states about God's guidance is true, and how others have claimed God's

guidance in even the small details of life.

"To Moses faith was no guesswork; it was a reality. He believed that God ruled his life in particular; and in all its details he acknowledged Him."—Education, p. 63. So if we will observe the conditions to prayer, including the Golden Rule, we may expect God to guide us in every detail. However, had we been greedy, or had our request been made to satisfy the desire for luxury, this could have been a completely different matter. But our request was made that we might be able to publish the book "YOUTH PRAYS—GOD ANSWERS", as well as another book entitled "THE STUDY GUIDE TO THE PRAYER OF RECEPTION", and still own a car that would meet our needs.

About this same time, a professional friend of ours in Southern California, learning we needed funds with which to defray the expenses of publication, sent us a sizeable check as a loan. We gave him also our personal note, and security in addition.

So, as you read these works, you will rejoice with us in the knowledge that God wanted these books published. He wanted them published that souls might be won to Jesus. He wanted them published so that our youth, as well as those older in years, might be inspired to launch out in the grand business in which all heaven is interested.

Yes, God is in business. The angels are in business. The Holy Spirit is in business. And all who love God are in business too. The business is soul-winning. That business is lifting up the blessed crucified, risen and soon-coming Saviour. It is crying out, "Whosoever will may take the water of life freely."

You can imagine how thrilled we are to share these experiences with you, our readers. How wonderful is our Lord! We feel somewhat like the

little girl in Alabama whom we shall call Ellen. Little Ellen had prayed and prayed for a bicycle. She had told Jesus she would use the bicycle mostly in missionary work, like enrolling folk in the Voice of Prophecy Correspondence Courses. When, in a thrilling and unexpected manner, her prayer was answered, she ran into the house, knelt with her mother and thanked her Lord for the bicycle and for His wonderful love. In sharing the experience with us, Ellen closed it with these words: "I hope Jesus comes while I am still a little girl, because I would love to sit on His lap and feel His face."

Some day we shall see the face of Him who so freely gives us all things needful to win souls; that is, when we ask, believe, and claim.

As an added thought regarding what God promises His children, we would like to share with you the following poem which hangs on the wall of the home of our gracious hostess:

#### WHAT GOD HATH PROMISED

God hath not promised skies always blue.  
Flower-strewn pathways all our lives through.  
God hath not promised sun without rain,  
Joy without sorrow, peace without pain.

But God hath promised strength for the day,  
Rest for the laborer, light on the way;  
Grace for the trial, help from above,  
Unfailing sympathy, undying love.

--Anon

My wife, who has labored so earnestly, even into the small hours of the morning, typing, correcting and editing this work, has fallen on her knees with me, dedicating this little work to our youth everywhere. May it inspire to "unfailing sympathy, undying love" for souls out of Christ; and for those also who are bruised and buffeted by

the enemy until the last spark of hope seems quenched. May the A, B, C's of the prayer of reception work for other young people, and their elders, even as it has worked for those whose experiences are revealed in this work. This is the dedicated purpose of this book. And may you, the reader, cry out with us—"YOUTH PRAYS--GOD ANSWERS"!

The Author

## Chapter 1

WANTED!

ROBERT JAMES BABCOCK!



HE SHERIFF'S car rolled into the driveway of The Mountain School, Whimsted, Washington. Kathryn Breadwell, a teacher, was busily engaged in her teaching, but then chanced to peer out of the window of the "Big House", as it was called, just in time to see Sheriff Hart Kiplinger get out of his car, walk briskly up the front walk and knock at the door.

Sheriff Kiplinger had responded to an all-points-bulletin for the immediate arrest of Robert James Babcock, age seventeen, of Costa Mesa. The authorities were aware of the fact that Bob had at one time been a student at The Mountain School; that an emergency appendectomy had forced him into General Hospital, and that his stay at the school had been abruptly terminated. Now the authorities were checking to make sure of his whereabouts.

Bob was not a hardened criminal; however he was moving in that direction rapidly. In addition to the more common habits of smok-

ing and drinking, Bob had had a few flings with some of the mind-affecting drugs. He had been involved in gang fights. He had terrorized the neighborhood. He had either thrown rocks or fired shots through the windows of homes and passing cars. He had been involved in violent disagreements with his ailing father, besides at least one car theft and problems which involved girls he had dated.

Even before this sickening experience of rebellion and havoc, Bob's conduct had been far from satisfactory while he had attended the Costa Mesa church school. There they had dismissed him as a "rotten apple" which was rapidly contaminating the whole barrel.

The authorities knew that it was about the time Bob was dismissed from the Costa Mesa church school that he had been admitted to The Mountain School, a new school just opening under the leadership of R. W. Hollister and his wife.

The Hollisters had known Bob when he was still in the church school. It was because of their eagerness to salvage him that, knowing his past, they still consented to his being admitted to The Mountain School. He was, with the rest of the students, entering this new school to become a part of a big, loving family. The atmosphere of sympathy and understanding would create a fellowship opportunity that Bob had been deprived of ever since his parents had been divorced. Bob had been farmed out to different homes since then and had not known the love and security that a home atmosphere provides.

However, before long the faculty at The Mountain School was to be sadly disappointed in Bob's behavior. In spite of the fact that the teaching force had taken Bob into their

very hearts, he was unresponsive. He sulked. He was belligerent. He disobeyed almost every rule. He continued the very type of life he had started earlier in the church day school at Costa Mesa. In spite of this, the faculty was so eager to salvage Bob that they forgave him repeatedly. They gave him chance after chance to change his way of living.

Some of the faculty, including Kathryn Breadwell, spent so much time counselling Bob that it seemed their very health was at stake. Hours which should have been devoted to rest and sleep were spent instead in exhaustive counselling sessions with poor Bob, trying to persuade, to inspire him to a higher format of thinking, and to a nobler life.

It seemed everyone had failed. There was no change.

After multiplied attempts to salvage Bob, covering a period of months, the faculty felt forced to the decision to let him go. Even as they voted to dismiss him, some of them wept as they called Bob to the "Big House" to announce to him their decision.

What a picture of contrast! There were heartbroken faculty members on the verge of tears; and there, too, stood Bob—belligerent, with lowered eyebrows and drawn face. When the decision was read to him, he grunted, "I just want OUT"!

However, as the faculty members began to tenderly explain that they did not want to have him go, but that it was the only thing they could do, Bob's attitude began to change a little. He began to see that he was about to lose the only real home he had ever known.

Although he had not been grateful nor responsive, The Mountain School had been good for Bob. He had learned something of love and affection and had come to know many won-

derful Christians. All of a sudden, the stark truth dawned on him that it was soon all to be lost. His dearest friends on earth had done all they could and he was about to lose them all. Where would he go from here?

As the dreadful truth actually dawned upon his conscious mind, he sat and gazed at the floor, reliving the good times he had had in that wonderful atmosphere. Tears began to flow from his eyes. Then he cried openly, unable to control himself. He sobbed as he pleaded with these dear faculty members to give him just one more chance! He promised and vowed that he would never again cause them trouble or heartache. Would they forgive him and extend mercy just this one more time?

I shall not soon forget what happened that night. I have worked with young people in colleges and academies in various parts of America, but never have I heard of anything as dramatic as what happened that night.

As the members of the faculty looked into that pitiful face, and listened to that pleading voice, they could not refuse forgiveness. It took just a moment to take a vote, when as one man, the members of the faculty voted to give Bob another chance.

Though Bob wanted to stay, the faculty were even more anxious to have him remain. Wonder of wonders! What a school! How like our Lord who never tires of forgiving the wayward!

It was only a matter of days however, before the high hopes and sincere faith of the faculty were to fall crashing to the ground. It was painfully clear that the old Bob was stronger than the new; and desire as he might to do right, he was a captive of his old nature, his old rebellion, his old life.

It was then that the last ray of hope for Bob seemed to be disappearing on the horizon.

Bob knew better the next year than to request admission to The Mountain School, and so enrolled in the public school in Costa Mesa and lived with his grandmother for a while.

Here he plunged deeper into his wild life of sin. His father evidently felt that this was due to the permissive attitude of the grandmother, so decided that Bob must come to live with him in Sacramento. Here he would make sure that Bob "toed the mark".

The father had evidently lost his touch with his boy and had not realized how far he had gone in rebellion; for when he tried to discipline his son, he found no sign of response. Instead, the father found his boy belligerent to the point that he feared Bob might turn on him physically.

The father was stunned! In exasperation he ordered Bob out of the house. In a fit of rage Bob left with just the clothes he wore—nothing more.

After all the conflict subsided, Bob's father began to reflect: What would become of his boy? How far would he go before the law would restrain him? All of the worst possibilities loomed up in his mind. It was then that he asked the police to issue an all-points-bulletin for his arrest. The father asked the police to place him in a detention home for boys until he was twenty-one.

Before the police caught up with Bob, he had slipped into his grandmother's home in Costa Mesa when she was away, forged her name on a check, cashed it, and was on his way to a "high old time".

Although he now had money in his pocket, he realized that now he had absolutely no

one to whom to turn. His father had kicked him out; he had stolen from his grandmother; and the school had dismissed him. Worse than this, he feared that his father might send the police after him.

He was miserable. Now he had no friends at all. He became desperately lonely. Fond memories filled his mind. He remembered the "good old days" at The Mountain School. How he wished he had kept his promises to them and had been willing to receive the help they so kindly offered. If he could only return there, what a difference it would make! How he longed for his friends at The Mountain School.

Finally he resorted to more deception. He would go to The Mountain School and ask them to let him stay there for just a few days. He would tell them that he had been suspended from the public school for those few days and would they mind if he stayed there as a guest until the time of his suspension was over. The more he thought about it, the more he liked the idea.

So he headed straight for the mountains of Whimsted. He was thrilled at the sight of the mountains of the State Park. In spite of the fact that he was now a fugitive from justice, the very thought of once more really breathing the forgiving atmosphere of The Mountain School spurred him on until he arrived at the school.

This was home! How good it felt! But now what to do? He lingered around the corner of a building where he would be sure to meet some of the faculty members.

It was not long until one of them walked by. He greeted the teacher with a smile and told him his lie. True to the spirit of the school, he was granted permission to stay for a few days and was granted the privilege of using the lower bunk in Tom Larson's room.

Between the time Bob arrived on the school campus and the arrival of the sheriff about a week later, he was to witness firsthand an experience that could change his life.

As Providence would have it, a group of students from La Sierra College, some nine hundred and fifty miles away, had just arrived on campus for an unusual series of meetings. These young people were teenagers and young adults in their early twenties. They came by truck and car. Some flew in with Dr. Fred Paulman, founder of the school, in his private plane. They had come there to share and teach seven lessons on "The Prayer of Reception".

These young people had not come to merely present the theory of "the prayer of reception", but without exception, each one of these individuals had experienced a thrilling new dimension of living through answered prayer. Each told of the change of life he or she had experienced as the result of this kind of praying. Their glowing faces and enthusiastic voices declared that they had now found what they wanted. One after another they related how they had turned to one of the 3,573 promises recorded in the Word, and had ASKED, BELIEVED, and CLAIMED the promise, saying, "I thank You, Lord, I have received the answer to Your promise in this verse of Scripture". They cited two authorities for their procedure. The first was Matthew 21: 22, "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

The second authority was taken from the book "Education", page 258. There it reads: ". . . for any gift He has promised, we may ask; then we are to believe that we receive, and return thanks to God that we have received".

To make it easy to remember, the A B C's

of prayer were worded this way:

A, is Ask--Matthew 7:7.

B, is Believe--Mark 11:24.

C, is Claim, or receive--John 11:41.

The students at The Mountain School sat spellbound as they listened, not to old people but to young people their own age, tell of an encounter with Jesus. They began to see that Christ's love is full, real, and personal. One of these promises is, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool". Isaiah 1:18. Another promise indicated how this change can take place: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness". I John 1:9.

The lessons taught, the experiences related brought an atmosphere to The Mountain School that was almost heavenly. The very air seemed charged with an electric current of love, joy, hope and power. Hearts were broken! Confessions followed. Lives were changed! Excitement prevailed everywhere, but no fanaticism. The Holy Spirit had visited that quiet campus, hidden away in the outskirts of the great state park.

With a joy that was contagious, students and faculty alike claimed first one promise of Scripture and then another. The young teachers from La Sierra College--called "panelists"--were drilling the youth in the truth that, "For any gift He has promised, we may ask," and, "The conditions met, the promise is unequivocal".--Education, p. 258.

"The promise is unequivocal" because "God is not a man, that he should lie". Numbers 23:19.

But there is another factor in the certainty of the promise that is not commonly understood by students of the Scriptures.

This is that each promise of God is "seed". "The seed is the word of God." Luke 8:11.

Now what is the significance of our Lord's using the term "seed"? We turn to God's other book, the book of nature, to find the answer.

Rutherford Platt, a prize winner in science, has declared that every normal apple seed contains three physical departments of an apple tree--the trunk, two leaves, and roots. It would require, he declares, a powerful magnifying glass to see them, but the tiny, tiny tree is right there nonetheless.

When I first read this statement by Mr. Platt in his book, "This Green World", pages 25 and 29, I could, by faith, always from then on, see a tiny, tiny apple tree in every normal apple seed, and a tiny, tiny oak tree in every normal acorn.

So, declares our favorite author: "As surely as the oak is in the acorn, so surely is the gift of God in His promise. If we receive the promise, we have the gift".--Education, p. 253.

This truth is repeated for emphasis, as follows: "We need look for no outward evidence of the blessing. The gift is in the promise, and we may go about our work assured that what God has promised He is able to perform, and that the gift, which we already possess, will be realized when we need it most."--Id., p. 258.

You see, friends, what science taught Rutherford Platt, Ellen G. White received by divine inspiration and revelation. Therefore, scientifically, we have a perfect right to return thanks to God that we have received the gift if we claim a simple--but dynamic--Bible promise, and fulfill its equally simple--but essential--conditions.



So the drilling of texts and ideas went on. "What is 'A' in the prayer of reception"?

The answer came back, "Ask, Matthew 7:7".  
"What is 'B' in the prayer of reception"?  
Again the answer, "Believe, Mark 11:24".  
"And what does 'C' stand for"?

A chorus of voices answered, "Claim, or receive, and return thanks that we have received. John 11:41".

There was no question now but what Bob had found what he wanted. Never before had he understood the dynamics of this wonderful thing called "the prayer of reception" based on "Believe that ye receive", Mark 11:24. Never before had he witnessed or been able to receive the love of God so broad, so strong, so intimate, so personal!

That night as Bob climbed into his bunk, Tom Larson overheard him sigh in relief, "Oh, it's so good to be back home"!

But the next day the sheriff came to take Bob away.

## Chapter 2

### YOUTH PRAYS—THINGS HAPPEN!



BOB ARRIVED on the campus of The Mountain School on a Wednesday morning. The sheriff came to arrest him the following Tuesday morning.

But so much had happened in those few days! God had spoken to Bob's heart, and he had responded. An indication of this was shown in the fact that he had called his grandmother and confessed his crime of forgery and theft. He had apologized to his father for his rudeness. More than this, he had asked for and obtained victory over smoking and drinking and a variety of other bad habits. He had met Christ and what a change it had made!

On the Sabbath between the above mentioned days, Hugh James, the man responsible for training these young people, had come to be with the group. He noticed Bob sitting alone in the afternoon, deep in thought. Engaging him in conversation, Hugh found that Bob was wondering how he might come back to The Mountain School and make a new start.

His problem was principally a financial one. More specifically, he needed about eighty dollars a month. He would work off twenty dollars, but that still left a sizeable sum to be raised. Hugh took this opportunity to share with Bob a wonderful promise. He turned to Philippians 4:19 and read, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Bob saw the light! He believed. He believed with all his heart—a heart that had responded to the invitation of Jesus; a heart that was full of appreciation to the faculty members for their love and kindness. For the first time Bob could understand what love really was. Prior to this he found it impossible to understand how the faculty members could love him when he was so mean. Now he began to see what true love was, and he was thrilled with it!

But all of a sudden the feared black cloud on the horizon was overhead. The sheriff was there now to bring to a sudden end all of the new joys and possibilities that had flooded Bob's mind.

The sheriff accompanied Bob to his room where he gathered up his few possessions. He then scribbled a hurried note to his roommate, Tom:

"I've left a few things for you to keep till I return; but if for some reason things don't work out, use them for yourself. Don't forget to claim the Bible promises for me.

"Sincerely,

"Bob".

With that, Bob climbed into the car, a new man in Christ Jesus—yet a prisoner of the State. This trip might be for a long time—in fact it could be several years.

This event electrified the entire student body and the visiting students from La

Sierra College. Word spread like wildfire. Hardly had the car disappeared out of sight when little groups of students could be seen all over the campus, praying. They were asking that somehow God would intervene and work the impossible.

They expected great things. Had they not seen a miracle already? They had claimed I John 5:16 for Bob already—a promise for backsliders—and it had brought about a dynamic change. Now they turned to another promise. This time they opened their Bibles to Proverbs 21:1, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will."

This promise states that God can move on the hearts of men to do the thing they had previously had no intention of doing,—like doing a complete right-about-face.

Specifically, the students were asking God to work upon the hearts of Bob's father and the authorities to have them understand that something had happened to Bob during the past week, and to impress them to drop the charges and allow Bob to return to The Mountain School. In addition to this request, they were also asking God to provide means—at least eighty dollars a month—to defray the cost of his tuition. Someone, somewhere would have to volunteer to help to this extent. This was a large request, but with one accord they placed their fingers on the Bible promises and Asked, Believed, and Claimed the promises. Then they thanked God that very moment, for answering their prayer.

It was a glorious sight. Faculty members, youth, and children united their hearts in pressing their petition to God. All day long the spirit of prayer prevailed on the campus. Before students and faculty

retired for the night, another importunate prayer season was conducted.

It must have been three or four days before any word was heard from Bob. Then the telephone rang. The operator asked for Principal R. W. Hollister. It took just a few minutes for word to get around that a long distance call had come for the principal.

"Who is it from?" the students were asking. Anticipation ran high that it might be from Bob or from someone involved in their prayer request.

It did not take long for the "Big House" to fill up with students. Eagerly they awaited word from their principal. Soon he came into the room and with a broad smile on his face he began to tell them of the conversation. Bob's father had called.

"What did he say? What did he say?" The students could hardly contain themselves.

It was hard for Mr. Hollister to get a word in edge-wise. But finally he was able to speak.

"Bob's father wants to know if there is a sponsor who will pay for Bob's tuition, should he be allowed to return.

"I told him that I thought there was a sponsor, but that I would have to call him back when I was certain".

There was a buzz of excitement that filled the air. "I knew the Lord had answered our prayers", someone said. This was repeated over and over again—even before it was actually known that a sponsor could be found.

Mr. Hollister immediately called Hugh James at La Sierra College and told him of the developments. Hugh promised to go right to work on the problem and call back the next day.

Again, all day long the students at The Mountain School claimed the promise of Proverbs 21:1. Now they had even greater incen-

tive to press their petition. They were sure that God would find just the right person to finance Bob at The Mountain School. Bob's father had made it clear that he could assume no responsibility financially due to the heavy surgery bills he was having to pay.

The next day Dr. Paulman called. Hugh James had contacted him and he had been able to arrange for several sponsors for Bob. They were now free to contact Bob's father and have Bob return to The Mountain School. What rejoicing there was that day in that little school!

Mrs. Breadwell, in relating this experience to me exclaimed, "To think that there are so many students who would love to come to The Mountain School but have no sponsor"! Then she added reflectively, "But that's where prayer comes in".

The God who turned the Red Sea aside and made a way for His children in ancient days, had impressed Bob's father and the civil authorities. The great God who had moved back the overflowing waves of old Jordan, had moved on the hearts of individuals back in the Los Angeles area to sponsor Bob's tuition. I learned later that some of these sponsors were young people with very limited incomes. Isn't it wonderful how our God works to fulfill His promises to His repentant children!

Professor Hollister tried for two days to call Bob's father but he could not get through. Finally on the third day Bob's father called saying that their phone had been out of order and he was calling to find out if there was any word for him.

"Yes, there sure is", Mr. Hollister replied. "All of the arrangements are made. We're waiting for Bob now".

The next day Bob and his father arrived, bag and baggage. His father was so appreci-

ative of all that the school had done for his boy and indicated that he had complete confidence in their authority and that whatever they decided was best for Bob, he was in complete agreement.

Although Bob had tried to remain courageous during the time since he had been forcibly taken away by the sheriff, he had, also, found that his strength was not too great. He had begun to smoke again. But now here at The Mountain School among his friends who had experienced a revival and a reformation, he was beginning to see victory again for himself.

"What's the best promise for me to claim for victory over my tobacco"? he asked one of the students.

"How about Jeremiah 33:3"? his kind young friend responded. Together they turned to the text and read, "Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not."

"Say, that's great"! Bob responded.

"And here's another text to go with that one. This one is found in Ezekiel 36:26,27. Look at what it says: 'A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them!'"

"This Scripture is exactly what I need", said Bob. He thought of his dark and sinful past; of all his vain efforts to change his course of action, his thoughts and his ways.

"That's what I must have—a new heart"! exclaimed Bob emphatically. He knew in his heart that this was going to be the answer—the only answer. With a new heart he could obey God and be successful.

At last he had found the way to real success. More than anything else Bob wanted what the Bible verse had promised.

"Do you really want what God says He will give you, Bob"? his friend asked.

"Yes, I do. I really do".

"Then I have another verse to share with you. It's a kind of a super promise". With that the friend turned to Matthew 18:19,20 where it says, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."

"We are both agreeing that one of the great and mighty things you need is a new heart—an obedient heart. And since both of us agree, it makes it doubly certain that you will receive it", his friend continued.

Then they knelt together and asked God to fulfill the promise He had made. They believed and claimed the promise, and while they were there on their knees, the promise was fulfilled! Something happened that made Robert James Babcock a new man!

"I have never so much as wanted one puff of a cigarette from that mement. I know these promises work. Praise God"! Bob's testimony was vibrant with feeling and positive assurance.

Bob now realized that there is no need that God will not supply; no longing that He will not satisfy; no habit of sin over which He will not give victory, and no sin that He will not forgive if we come in simple faith through the merits of Jesus our Lord. "For with God nothing shall be impossible." Luke 1:37.

Bob had met Jesus. He had begun to know Him personally now. Religion and the way of righteousness were becoming attractive and meaningful now. Oh, how things had changed!

"From that point on, the school did not have a moment's trouble with Bob", confided Mrs. Breadwell. "He grows more sincere as each day goes by. Truly, we have seen the working of the Lord here. To see the complete change in a life like that is a thrill that can only be experienced. It is hard to put into words. The young people from La Sierra and their program of prayer were used of God to reach that heart. Prior to that time all of our efforts were in vain--we just could not get through to him. We're all so grateful and so happy for what has happened".

It has been six months ago that this wonderful event took place. As I write these lines for this book, I felt I must check on Bob's progress. I'm happy to tell you that the report was, "Bob is just making wonderful progress, and finding renewed courage each day! The feelings of rebellion he entertained for his father have all vanished. He feels now that his father was actuated only by the most unselfish motives in the way he dealt with him when he ran away from home".

This is the difference prayer makes. Youth praying and working for youth! Isn't it wonderful! We are only seeing the beginning of great things that will yet take place to prove that there is a God in heaven that loves His children and delights to answer large requests unselfishly made.

We are not suggesting that Bob will have no problems with himself in the future--far from it! Rather, we are saying that he now has the tools which, if he will, he may use to shape his character. Whether he is defeated or victorious in the struggle, depends upon his alertness and determination--or failure--in using this wonderful science he learned at The Mountain School.

### Chapter 3

## YOUTH'S ADVENTURES IN PRAYER



ARRIVED on The Mountain School campus at midnight. A guest room was waiting for me at the "Big House". Because I was very weary, I requested the privilege of sleeping in the next morning, which of course was graciously granted.

However, as daylight dawned, something impelled me to get up and go to the cafeteria. There I witnessed a fellowship between faculty and students which was unique. In just a few minutes I felt a part of a big, loving family.

While most of the faculty members eat in their own homes, one or two of them eat with the students on a rotation basis. That particular morning the faculty member present had volunteered to make the pancakes. It seemed that one of the students had done a poor job of making pancakes the morning before, and now the faculty member was going to "show them how it was done"!

What a time we had that morning! Someone had cleverly mixed some cheesecloth in

with the batter, and when the pancakes were served it was evident that the cook had not been too successful! There was much good humor evident that morning, and all enjoyed a good meal as well. I found the meals to be very tasty although many of the frills were omitted. The students looked healthy and seemed to enjoy their meals. There was a good spirit prevailing in every department of the school. No holier-than-thou attitude was to be seen anywhere.

After breakfast I went back to the "Big House" and soon realized that something of special interest was absorbing the attention of the students. I saw them busily talking to each other and after observing for a while, I asked what the trouble was.

I was told that Eddy, one of their fellow students, was told by his parents that he was going to have to leave the school that morning. They told me how Eddy had begun to love The Mountain School, and how that after much prayer and Bible study he was preparing to be baptized at the next baptismal service. Now his parents had decided that Eddy was getting too much religion and it was time for him to come home. They did not want their boy uniting with this "queer" church.

The students were looking for a promise that they might claim to either change the parents' minds, or else to help Eddy, if taken back home, to witness to his new-found faith.

When Eddy's parents arrived, he pleaded with them to let him stay. He tried to tell them what a wonderful school this was and how much it had done for him. In his attempt he was so emotionally involved that a few tears came to his eyes. But all his pleas fell on deaf ears. In fact, it made his parents only the more determined to remove their

boy from a place that was having such an influence upon him.

The parents were determined, and it was not long until Eddy's things were packed in the car and the last goodbyes were said. Again, faculty and students pressed their petitions to God, asking Him to intervene. They asked God to impress these parents and allow Eddy to return, if that was His will. If it was not, then they asked that Eddy be given words to speak and power to live so that the parents would be converted by their son's life and example.

Before the week was over, Eddy wrote to his friends at the school. He told how he was enjoying his new-found faith and that the Lord was giving him courage to remain true to his convictions. "The preacher is coming over tonight and my parents think that he will prove me to be wrong. But I know what the Bible says, and I'm determined to live by it", wrote Eddy.

A week later Eddy wrote again. He said, "Claim promises for me, and it may be that God will use me to convert the minister who is coming over again this evening to see me to try to persuade me to give up my new-found faith".

Prominent, and leading out valiantly as a prayerband leader was Bob—this once trigger-happy, knife-wielding youth who just a few weeks earlier had been taken away by the sheriff. He was now a Bible-carrying, promise-claiming firebrand. He knew what it was to have prayers answered. He knew, too, what Jesus in the heart can do to one's outlook on life. His life was infecting the lives of many other students.

The entire student body reflected an awareness of the presence of heavenly angels on the campus. Even their singing was fired with enthusiasm. As I sat and listened to

them sing, I contrasted the music I heard with that of many other teenagers in other places I had held meetings. What a difference!

When I began to speak, the moment I announced by text, pencils and notebooks came out. I shall not soon forget the earnestness and zeal these students exhibited in an attempt to memorize and practice the truths they learned.

Soon it was time to ask for decisions for baptism. I had previously talked with Principal Hollister about the possibilities. "I think there may be two or three who will want to be baptized", he told me. You can imagine our surprise when fifteen young people indicated their desire to prepare for baptism when the invitation was extended. There were several more who indicated a desire to attend the classes but they were not sure that they wanted to be baptized at this time. Still others, who had already been baptized, wanted to attend just to refresh the truths in their minds. All were welcomed.

As the week drew to a close, I invited any students who would like to, to write out their experience of the past week and give it to me as a souvenir of our time together. One young man wrote:

"When we were told that it was time for the Week of Prayer, I could hardly bear the thought of having to sit through another long week of sermons and testimonies and prayers. But this has been a good week. A few things have changed in my life. I have had my first real experience in prayer. I've seen prayer answered. I'm interested in the Bible now. In fact, I might be a preacher myself some day".

I shared some of these experiences with the faculty. "This is worth a year's pay",

said one teacher. Incidentally, the teachers at The Mountain School have been giving their services free, except for board, room and utilities. Maybe this accounts in part for the unselfish, unstinted love and service these teachers render to their students. I think it is the ninth wonder of the world! For the most part, these are all highly-qualified teachers. Talk about people dying for a cause!—these teachers are living and giving for a cause!

The students are taught that God lives and loves and that He is interested in the little things of life as well as the large. They have experienced that God will answer prayer even in life's minor matters. I think of Linda, a young sixteen-year-old student. She wrote me a letter in which she shared an experience that illustrates this point:

"I had studied hard for a Bible test we were to have. When we were ready to write the test, the teacher asked us to write four memory verses we were supposed to have learned. I had memorized them and began to write. I wrote the first two out without hesitation. Then my mind went blank. I could not remember a word of the other two. I decided to claim the promise of James 1:5 for wisdom. As soon as I opened my eyes I started writing and didn't stop until I had written all four memory verses. When I received my paper back, I noticed that the first two memory verses had several mistakes in them but the last two were word perfect. God is good! He answers the prayers of those who ask".

Another student had a similar experience. This young lady was having trouble diagramming sentences for her English II assignment. "I sat and looked at the sentences for the longest time. I finally decided that this was just wasting time, so I asked the Lord for wisdom and claimed James 1:5. Once again



I read the directions and looked at the first sentence. It was as if a curtain was pulled back. I began to see exactly what had to be done, and finished the assignment without any further problem. Prayer really works".

God was answering all kinds of prayers for those students who came to Him in simple faith. One student had suffered severely with a bad back. One of the teachers was able to give him some relief by massaging it and twisting it, snapping it into place.

"One day", this student wrote, "I was suffering unusually bad. I went to have the teacher give me some help, but found that he had gone off campus and would not be back all day. It hurt to sit, it hurt to lie down, it hurt to walk and stand. I was miserable. Suddenly I remembered the power that was awaiting my use through the medium of prayer. I remembered, too, that I could claim the promises of the Bible.

"Not knowing which one to claim, I decided to turn to Matthew 7:7, 'Ask, and it shall be given you; . . .' I put my finger on the promise and prayed, asking God to take away the hurt. When I finished praying I got up, but my back still hurt. Then I remembered that I had not thanked God for healing my back. I prayed again and thanked God for having heard my request and for having answered me. I got up from my knees and opened my books and began to study. It hurt just a little, but my heart was filled with thanksgiving. In a half-hour I had to leave the room to take care of an errand, and only then did I realize that I was completely free of pain. My heart overflowed with thankfulness."

The miracles of God's love were not confined to the campus. One of the students, a sixteen-year-old freshman, had a burden for her father. He had been brought up in the Adventist faith, but for a number of reasons

had become careless and indifferent. This had caused some friction in the home and Mother and Father had grown cool toward each other. The home was deteriorating.

"I began to claim I John 5:16, 'If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death.' I asked my roommate to join me in claiming this promise for my father. Then I wrote to my mother and asked her to join us in pressing this petition to heaven for my father.

"It seemed it was only a short time later that I received a letter from Mother stating that Father had surrendered his heart to the Lord afresh, and that all was so much happier at home. Mother was thrilled. I was thrilled. And best of all, Daddy is now a vibrant Christian once again", she wrote.

Tom Larson, the young man who had been such an inspiration to Bob while he was going through his Gethsemane, had an outstanding experience. It was simple and involved an item not worth more than one dollar. He had an answer to prayer that involved the crown, or winding wheel of his watch. Just as the sun was setting one Friday evening, he noticed that the crown was gone. It had been loose for some time, but he had always been able to screw it back on and keep his watch wound. Suddenly he realized it was gone. He did not know where to begin looking because he did not know when it came off. He had worked all day on the boys' new dormitory. It could have come off then, or it might have fallen off just a moment before when he was crossing the campus, jumping over some of the mud puddles that had formed after the rain. He did not have any extra money with which to buy a new one. The Lord knew this. The Lord knew too, that he needed the watch to be on time for his many appointments, etc.



"So I prayed", Tom wrote, "and I claimed the promise of Matthew 7:7,8: 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth . . .'"

"I asked God to help me find the crown. I told Him I believed He would, and then thanked Him that He had found it and asked Him to direct me to it. I went back to the new dormitory and began looking through the sawdust and sand on the floor. As I was looking my roommate came to join me. Together we looked. I told my roommate that God had answered my prayer, but I was just having to exercise faith in His promise. As I made my way to the corner of the building I saw something shiny lying in the corner. I went over to it and picked up my tiny crown!

"I knew God would answer my prayer", Tom said, "but even so I actually jumped for joy, I was so grateful. God is so good! He extends His grace, when we least deserve it."

And speaking of God's wonderful grace, let us share the following experience with you. It is that of a young man before he had given his heart without reservation to Jesus.

"During August of 1966 my brothers and I went to the beach. It was a bit chilly and no one wanted to get wet. But since we had come to swim I decided to be brave and jump in. I swam out past the breakers and soon found myself in calm water. I was having a good time out there in the Pacific all by myself.

"Soon the waters became rough and I decided to go back in. But try as I might, I was being taken further out all the time. My strength was being exhausted and I knew I needed help. By this time I was so far out my brothers couldn't hear my shouts for help.

"I knew I wasn't ready to die. I had

lived a life of sin, but I knew, too, that God loved me. So I prayed and promised God that if He would save me I would serve Him.

"Somehow I remembered having heard my father read in the Psalms, 'Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy; to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive. . . .' Psalms 33:18,19. I prayed again.

"The waves were getting bigger, and my strength was getting weaker. God had saved others out of times of trouble. I was now asking Him to help me. Promises of the Bible somehow came to my mind. I remembered Psalms 34:6,7: 'This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.'"

"I knew the Lord could save me. I prayed again and swam with all my might toward the shore. It seemed a couple of waves were now helping me. Presently I found I was able to touch ground. Then I rested for a moment.

"By this time my brothers could see I was in trouble, and they spurred me on, encouraging me not to give up even though they knew they could not physically help me. With one more mighty try I was able to make it to shore and fell exhausted on the ground.

"I thanked God for what He had done for me, and have tried, to the best of my ability, to keep my end of the bargain. I love the Lord and am daily thankful to Him for His goodness to me. Now I feel as did David when he said, 'I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, . . . set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God.' Psalms 40:1-3."

It was thrilling to see how the faculty members put into practice what was being taught on the prayer of reception. Often folk who have matured find it difficult to learn something entirely new and put it into practice. But not so at The Mountain School. On more than one occasion I heard men and women--some with their Masters degrees--praying in childlike faith and simplicity. Along with the students they asked, believed, claimed and returned thanks to God for hearing and answering their prayers.

One such prayer involved the school water pump. It was obvious that something would have to be done to provide enough drinking and cooking water for the students and the faculty. "We wanted to put in a new pump on a certain day, but the funds were not available," wrote one of the faculty members.

"We decided to make this a matter of prayer. Even as we prayed, a further disaster frustrated our situation. The well caved in. We continued to pray, and before the week was over enough money came in to pay for the fixing and recasing of the well, as well as being able to install a new pump! The well-digger said that if the pump had been installed earlier we would have lost it when the well caved in. Now we have a good well and a good pump. God knew our needs before we did, and He supplied them in His good time.

"We are so thankful that we can serve such a God", the teacher concluded.

One of the teachers had a dramatic experience in which she prayed for healing and God answered. She wrote the following account.

"For three years I had been having problems with high blood pressure. The work here at The Mountain School is a real mental and emotional strain, so this did not help

my problem any--it only aggravated it. After learning the A, B, C's of prayer, I started praying for healing from high blood pressure. This problem had kept me upset for some time.

"I claimed III John 2, 'Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.' and Isaiah 26:3, 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.'

"I prayed earnestly several times a day, using the A, B, C's of prayer. In two weeks I went back to the doctor for a checkup. My blood pressure was normal for the first time in more than three years, and I have not had any trouble since. I truly believe the Lord has completely healed me and He has given me peace of mind as He has promised."

Truly the Lord is good to those who in childlike faith claim the vast resource of power and help that He has promised.

I was eager to learn the reaction of the young people to a possible disappointment such as could have come to Tom had he not found the tiny winding crown to his watch.

"We know", one of their teachers assured me, "that there are times when God must teach us a lesson in carefulness. Hence we pray a prayer of reception in the spirit of commitment. We also understand that God must teach us patience. Hence we do not become bitter when God chooses to answer our prayers in a way, or at a time, which we do not expect". We can always know that He who spared not His own Son, but delivered up Christ on the cross for us (Romans 8:32), will freely give us all things that are for our best good.

## Chapter 4

### SCIENTIFICALLY IMPOSSIBLE--

### YET IT HAPPENED!



COULD have rated the newspaper headlines," began Peter Graham, a teenage student at La Sierra College, "had I not learned the prayer of reception last week".

La Sierra College is a liberal arts college, now a part of Loma Linda University, and both situated in an area that is surrounded by beautiful mountains near Riverside and San Bernardino, California.

You will remember that it was from La Sierra College that Hugh James and his group of young people came to bring the inspiration and instruction on the prayer of reception to The Mountain School.

Now back to Peter. "I had made arrangements with some friends of mine to go hiking in the high Sierras," Peter went on, "but the weather turned bad. It rained, froze and then snowed. So my friends changed their minds and told me they were not going. But I went anyway.

"I know I was foolish to go by myself, especially when the weather conditions were so

bad", he said to the prayer class; "but I claimed a promise before I set out, and I guess that is what saved me."

The Bible promise that Peter claimed was one that the class had used a few nights before in behalf of a backslider. This promise impressed Peter so much that he decided to use it before going on his hazardous journey. It was the promise of I John 5:16. Peter claimed the sentence that reads, "... he shall ask, and he shall give him life ..."

"After I had reached the top, I was walking along a narrow, icy ledge when all of a sudden a gust of wind unbalanced me and I started sliding down a two thousand foot precipice!"

The class sat in rapt attention as Peter continued his story. "In an instant I slammed against a huge rock some fifty feet down the mountain. Had there not been a cushion of snow against that rock, I would have surely broken my neck or back. I had hit that rock with a terrific blow.

"When I realized that I was still alive, I thanked God. Then I began to evaluate my position. I peered around the snowbank and realized that there was a sheer drop of about two thousand feet on either side of me. It frightened me for a moment, and I just sat there, too scared to move. I realized that, barring a miracle, there was not a chance that I would get out of that spot alive.

"There was no one around to hear my cry for help, except God. It was then I realized what my need was, and I claimed a Bible promise to fill that need. I remembered James 1:5, 'If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, ... and it shall be given him'. If there was one thing above another that I needed just then, it was wisdom. So I ASKED, and I BELIEVED that God would give

me wisdom. I CLAIMED that promise and then THANKED Him for having given me wisdom to know how to get out of that predicament.

"But now what to do? Presently I was impressed to use my fingernails to dig through the thin layer of ice to make steps on which I could safely plant my feet and so get to safety

"But my vision was very poor and I could very easily be digging steps in the wrong direction. But I prayed and believed that God would help me, and so I began to work cautiously, but diligently. My fingers became raw from chipping away the ice, but I kept on, believing that God was leading me in the right direction.

"Presently I realized that the terrain was much more level, and I ventured to stand up. It was only then that I realized that I was back on safe ground. I looked back to where I had come from and was impressed how God had answered my prayer. Had I come up any other way than the way I had come, I would have worked my fingers raw in vain. This was the only route that could possibly lead to safety. And God led me in that path. I stood there and offered a prayer of thanks to God for His willingness to help me out of a predicament I would not have gotten into if I had used good common sense and stayed home."

A sigh of relief came over the class as Peter finished his story. They all agreed that his conclusions were justified, and rejoiced in God's love and mercy.

As soon as Peter sat down, Dick Weaver, a college senior, stood to his feet to share his experience of only a few days earlier.

"Semester exams have always been a headache to me," Dick began. This time I felt I

was not as well prepared for them as I should like to have been. I had studied faithfully during the semester, but due to circumstances beyond my control, I was unable to review for the exams I was to take the next day.

"I went to bed, but I could not sleep. I rolled, tossed, and tumbled, but sleep would not come. Now I was faced with the realization that if I could not sleep, I would not have the alertness I so desperately needed in the morning.

"Just then I remembered the challenge that had been given in the class on The Prayer of Reception. We had been told to take our Bibles, place our finger on a promise, and then Ask, Believe and Claim that promise, and God would answer that kind of prayer.

"So I claimed the promise of Matthew 11: 28-30, which says: 'Come unto me . . . and I will give you rest'. That is exactly what I needed. Then I thanked God that He had given me the promised rest.

"With that I turned out the light, climbed back in bed, and the next thing I knew it was morning. I got up and felt refreshed—unusually refreshed. I wrote my exams and made the best marks I believe I have ever made. There is no question in my mind that the Prayer of Reception is the greatest thing I have ever come across," Dick said in conclusion.

Dick had grasped the promise of Matthew 11:28 like a drowning man reaches at a straw; but he discovered it was, not a straw, but an anchor. (See Hebrews 6:13-19.)

When Dick was through, other students testified to the God "that cannot lie" (Titus 1:2), because it is "impossible for God to lie" (Hebrews 6:18), for "hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good" (Numbers 23:19)?

Alice Black was attending her first class that night Peter and Dick related their experiences. As they, along with other young people, told how God was answering prayer, Alice sat spellbound.

"Could this be the answer to my problem?" thought Alice. She wanted so much to believe that it was, because she realized that she so desperately needed help. For, you see, Alice was a barbituate addict. Her problem had been hounding her steps for years, and like a clever spider it had fastened its web around her until there seemed no way out.

Unless one has gone through the experience, or had a loved one involved with this, it is very difficult to imagine the torment that it brings to the heart. The bodily and mental suffering, the feelings of remorse and frustration combine to make life a weary and vicious circle without hope, without freedom and without the sweet fellowship of our Lord. In vain one cries out, "How long, O Lord, how long?"

To point up the seriousness of Alice's situation, I might tell you that her father is a medical doctor, and with all of his medical understanding of the problem, he had been unable to bring her release from the habit. He recognized what it was doing to her and, try as he might, pray as he did, and plead with her as he did, nothing changed the picture. Alice was "hooked"—and "hooked" good.

I do not know whether Alice ever confided in a minister. Perhaps, knowing as she did the hopelessness of her condition, she was ashamed to tell anyone for fear that her confidence would be betrayed. She preferred to suffer in quiet desperation, alone.

As Alice sat, listening to the students relate real answers to prayer—answers to real problems—her heart became strangely

warm. Confidence was once again awakened—a confidence that had lain dormant for such a long time. She compared herself and her condition with the vibrant youth and their marvelous encounters with a real God, and His response to their prayers. She allowed herself, very cautiously, to ponder the possibility that she, too, might have this kind of an experience. But just as hope began to rise in her heart, a voice seemed to say, "Alice, your case is hopeless. You have tried before—over and over again—and you have failed each time. You will never be able to give it up. You're hooked for life."

But then as these young people, with faces radiant with victory, spoke, it seemed the possibility of personal victory might be hers too. Her heart beat wildly within her breast as she contemplated how different life would be—how happy she could be if only——.

The moderator of the class announced that it was now time for them to divide into small groups, about 6 to a group, and put the lesson of the evening into practical use. Each group was led by a panelist. Alice found herself in one of these small groups.

"Now we are going to select the name of one individual, a backslider. Then, conforming to the seven great laws of soulwinning, we will work together with the Lord to reclaim that particular backslider", he said.

Alice watched and listened carefully as they were instructed to take their Bibles and place their fingers on a specific promise and claim it for that specific person. The panelist quoted from "Education", page 258, "For any gift He has promised, we may ask; then we are to believe that we receive, and return thanks to God that we have received."

A specific name was chosen for whom

prayer was to be offered. Oh, the confidence the panelist displayed that this individual would return, regardless of his waywardness—his utter abandon of the way of right. Just to hear that kind of faith expressed was a real balm to Alice's heart.

"Now we will open our Bibles and turn to I John 5:16 and place our finger on the text and then put into practice the A, B, C's of Bible prayer. We'll Ask, Believe and Claim the promise for the individual mentioned. Then before we rise from our knees, we will thank God that we have received, in embryo form, our request," the panelist instructed.

Alice felt a surge of faith as she, with six other young people, knelt to pray with open Bibles. How wonderful it was to be in the presence of the God of heaven!

Alice would not permit herself to burst into tears before the group. She wanted to give vent to her feelings, but wisdom restrained her. It might provoke some questions, and she did not want to have to explain to anyone. She kept her face as serene as possible throughout the entire ordeal. After the prayer season was over, the classes dismissed and Alice made her way to her car as quickly as possible.

"This will work for me"! she said, once in her car and away from the ears of others. "It's going to work for me. I know it is. God is no respecter of persons. and I am going to take Him at His word," she mused, more excited than she had been in a long time.

When she arrived home, she lost no time in opening her Bible to Matthew 11:28. Oh, how sweet that promise sounded, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden; and I will give you rest."

"That means me," thought Alice. "I'm

included in that verse. I need rest—rest without drugs."

Falling on her knees with the Bible open before her, Alice asked—she asked God to fulfill the promise. Here was One to whom she could open her soul. He would not break her confidence, neither would He break His word. Jesus had promised, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matthew 24:35).

As Alice prayed, she found herself breathing a prayer of confident faith, "Lord, I do believe. Now I claim the promise You have given. Thank You, Lord, for having given me victory."

It was so very simple. Yet it had worked for others. It must work for her too.

Three weeks later I heard Alice relate what had happened. "After I prayed, I climbed into bed and turned out the light. I fell into a sweet sleep and the next thing I knew, the sun was shining through my window! It was morning, and I hadn't had a single barbituate! I could hardly believe it! I went all day without any help from drugs. That night I repeated the procedure. Once again I knelt down and claimed the promise. Again I slept soundly and woke up refreshed. I have done this now for the past three weeks, and I have had the most marvelous three weeks I have spent in the past number of years! It's marvelous! The greatest experience I have ever had!"

She could hardly contain herself as she related her victorious experience. "God has not only given me physical rest; I now have spiritual rest, as well as that peace of mind that He alone can give. I love Him so much for what He has done for me," she concluded.

After hearing the students tell their experiences of answered prayer, and thrilling to the experience Alice had just gone



through, I decided to record these in this little book for the help they might be to others who are struggling with habits, or doubt, or fear, or whatever the problem might be. But I wanted to be absolutely sure that my facts were right. It is easy to over-extend the facts some times when the stories involve the supernatural. So I called Alice on the phone to double check again on the facts and to see how she was doing.

"Would you permit me to tell your story in a book, Alice?" I asked. Alice readily agreed and thought this kind of a book would be a blessing to many. Then I asked the question that was really uppermost in my mind. "Now Alice," I said, "have you taken even one barbituate since the night you found deliverance?"

Without a moment's hesitation, and with a burst of enthusiasm, she said, "No, not one!"

One day later, as we were visiting with a doctor friend of ours, we related the story I have just told you. He listened very attentively, and when we were through he said, "That's wonderful! Amazing! Do you know that medical science still has not effected a cure for drug addiction? Yes, they have ways of helping a person, but this kind of a cure is foreign to medical science. In fact, it's impossible. Only God can give that kind of a cure!" he exclaimed.

I was not sure that what our doctor friend had told us was really just the way he said. I was curious now to know whether other medical men felt the same as he. So I talked to another medical doctor friend of mine. I told him the same story we had told the first doctor. This doctor said, "No medical doctor would ever prescribe that procedure for a cure. The patient is liable to go into shock that could kill him. Only

the intervention of divine power could cause it to be otherwise."

God did intervene in Alice's case, and wonderful have been the results of His blessings. Alice has now found a new life and has been sharing it with many of her friends. Her enthusiasm has been infectious, and now her father has joined her in attending the classes at which the prayer of reception is taught. His soul has caught the fire and in turn he is leading others to this new experience.

How marvelous and wonderful is our God! With David we can say, "Marvelous things did he in the sight of their fathers . . ." Psalms 78:12.

This same God is still willing and able to do marvelous things for us today if we ask Him, and fulfill the simple conditions outlined in His holy Word.

Our Lord Jesus is waiting to give us all rest if we will only be responsive to His Holy Spirit.

## Chapter 5

### YOUNG DAVE STEWARD IN ACTION



Y, BUT I'm hungry!" exclaimed Dave to no one in particular as he made his way through line at the cafeteria. "This crisp ocean air certainly gives a fellow an appetite."

With a tray loaded with good vegetarian food, he made his way to an empty table, sat down, and after giving thanks for all his blessings, prepared to satisfy his hunger.

As he ate, he glanced around the large dining room, noticing the neat arrangement of things. As his eyes wandered around they suddenly focused on a man sitting alone at one of the tables. He looked so forlorn and unhappy. Before him was a small bowl of cereal and a glass of milk.

"He looks as if he doesn't have a friend in the world, nor a penny to his name," thought Dave. "He looks utterly dejected. I wonder if I could say something to cheer him up."

As Dave ate he wondered about what he might say to this man. He had no idea how to approach him, so he decided to claim the

promise of James 1:5 for wisdom. Not knowing anything about the man's circumstances, Dave certainly needed the Lord's help in making the right approach.

Thanking God for answering his prayer, Dave finished his meal and walked over to the table where the man was seated. With a smile he began, "Excuse me, sir, my name is David Steward. I'm a theology student at La Sierra College in Riverside."

The gentleman stood and offered Dave his hand. "I'm happy to meet you, David," he said as the two shook hands warmly. "I've been watching you, and wishing that my life could be as full of ambition as yours seems to be. Won't you sit down, please?"

When they were seated, Dave said, "Well, I've just found a new life in Jesus which has given me tremendous hope. If you don't mind, I'd like to share some experiences with you."

"Not at all," answered Dave's new acquaintance. "In fact, you may be the answer to a problem that needs to be settled in my own life. Go right ahead."

As they talked together, Dave began to notice several interesting things about this man. In spite of the condition of his clothes, and the wan and hopeless expression of his countenance, his respectful conduct and verbal expressions were reflective of a rich cultural background. Further, his conversation revealed the fact that Dave was speaking with a former Harvard University man!

Dave could not help wondering how a successful man like this, could deteriorate to this low level. "There must be a reason," he thought, "and maybe this is what he wants to talk about."

Dave realized that this was a great challenge, so again he prayed for wisdom and tact,



asking God to give him words to speak, words that would be "meat in due season."

"Your story is very interesting, Dave," the man said. "I wish I had a life with meaning to it," he went on. "I've got a problem. It seems I'm running away from something continually."

Then in a very serious tone he asked, "Could I be running from God?" Before Dave could answer, he continued, shaking his head, "No, God wouldn't be calling after me. I'm just no good. I'm too rotten."

There was a moment of silence and Dave took advantage of it. "You remind me of one of the great men in the Bible, the Apostle Paul. He called himself the 'chief of sinners'. He wanted to do right, but in his own strength and without God, he could not. But in the very next chapter, in the book of Romans, he speaks of finding a new life—life with the Spirit of God in control."

The man said nothing. He was trying to grasp what Dave had just said. Dave continued, "In the Bible, in the thirty-sixth chapter of Ezekiel, God says to you and me, 'A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you . . . and cause you to walk in my statutes.'"

"In other words, there is nothing we can do but submit to God, knowing that He will accept us as we are. Then we will be renewed and do the things we should, not in our own strength but by the miracle of God's grace and power."

Very thoughtfully the man said, "You know, God has approached me twice before, and both times I have refused Him."

With that the man stood to his feet, extended his hand and said, "Young man, you'll never know what you've done for me. Thanks a lot. This has been another encounter with God!"

Ellen G. White has recorded this statement: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." Such a promise is of more value than gold or silver. If with a humble heart you seek divine guidance in every trouble and perplexity, his word is pledged that a gracious answer will be given you. And his word can never fail. Heaven and earth may pass away, but his word will never pass away. Trust in the Lord, and you will never be confounded or ashamed. 'It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes.'"--Testimonies, Vol. 5, p. 427.

As Dave and his friend made their way to the door, Dave was thinking furiously how he might enhance the visit he had just had. Suddenly he said, "Would you like a little book I have which has helped me to find the way of hope?"

"Why, yes," the man replied, "I would appreciate anything that might help me."

"Good. If you'll give me your address I'll bring it over tonight," Dave said.

With that the man gave him an address of a hotel and told him he would look for him that night.

Dave made his way back to his hotel room, and since the convention he was attending was about over, and the rest of the conventioners were going to a dance that night, he decided that he would enjoy visiting the old man again. So tucking his personal copy of "Steps to Christ" under his arm, he made his way to the address he had been given.

It was a dingy hotel, not at all a pleasant place to live. He climbed the stairs and found the room that was indicated on his slip of paper. He knocked, but to his sorrow,

there was no answer. "I don't blame him for not staying in here," Dave thought to himself.

Taking out a piece of paper and his pen, Dave wrote his new friend a note, wishing him God's blessing and inviting him to keep the book.

Dave probably will never know in this life what effect his testimony has had on the man. But one thing Dave does know: without having learned how to claim the Bible promises he would never have dared approach this man and share his experience.

Dave made his way back to his hotel, and having nothing else of any importance to do, he turned on the TV and found a special CBS report on UFO's. It was not long before his roommate returned. Noticing what was on TV the roommate said, "I've studied quite a bit about UFO's. There sure are a lot of theories about what they are and where they come from, aren't there?"

Dave recognized the possibility of sharing his faith again, but realized that he needed wisdom to know just what to say so as not to antagonize his new friend. Once again he claimed the promise of James 1:5 and asked God to give him words to speak.

"Yes, there sure are," Dave said. "In fact, this report indicated that these objects are not only scientific, but have a religious overtone."

"A religious overtone, eh?" the roommate mused. "Say, Dave, you're a Christian. You know quite a bit about the Bible. What's your philosophy on this?"

"Well, from what I have studied, I feel if there is anything to it, it must be the forces of evil using science to try to undermine the forces of good."

"I believe you might have something there, Dave. I've been doing a lot of think-

ing lately, and I've been of somewhat the same opinion." commented Dave's roommate.

He took off his shoes and stretched out on the bed. "I've had many questions and have come to just a few conclusions," he continued. "One of the conclusions I've come to is that the only way to find fulfillment in life is to be of service to someone else. That's why I'm so deeply involved in this Red Cross convention. You must have a similar purpose or you would not have taken off time from your busy college activities to come as a delegate."

Dave nodded, but before he could say anything, his roommate continued, "But the one thing that bugs me is: why are we here anyway? What are we doing? And where are we headed? What's the purpose of life?"

"Well, that's a pretty big order. I don't know whether I can completely answer your questions or not, but I do know the Bible has some pretty definite things to say about these questions. Would you like for me to share them with you?"

"Sure thing. I wish you would."

And so with the roommate comfortably perched on his bed, relaxing his head on his hand, Dave began to share again his faith.

Dave reached for his Bible and opened it. "When God created the universe and this world, He had a definite purpose in mind. The Bible tells us that 'he formed it to be inhabited' Isaiah 45:18. Genesis 1:27 says that man was made 'in the image of God.' Man was a happy creature, the masterpiece of God's handiwork.

So long as he kept in close communion with his Maker, man continued to live in this happy and holy state. But when he began to serve himself, and when he became the center of all his ideas and plans, he soon reached the place where it was natural for him to do

evil and not good. If he were to remain in this condition forever, then, as you have asked, what is the purpose of humanity in this world?"

"But," Dave continued, "since God created man for a purpose, it was still His plan to fulfill that purpose and to bring humanity back from the ruin and degradation in which we find it today. You see, when God is again the center of each life, and every action and thought deals with serving others, then, and only then, can humanity have fulfilled its own, and God's purpose for it, in this world."

Dave's roommate had a thoughtful expression on his face. "Dave," he exclaimed, "I believe you've got something there! But tell me, how does man go about fulfilling this purpose? It's a natural thing for us to want our own way. In my work I see it every day. And it seems to be getting worse instead of better."

"Yes, I think you're right," agreed Dave. "Here's a verse that says much the same thing." Turning to Jeremiah 13:23 he read, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil."

"God knew that man, in his sinful state, was incapable of choosing God as the center of his life in order to think and do good to others, so He had the prophet Ezekiel pen this promise over here in the 36th chapter:

"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: . . . and a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you . . . and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."

"But," Dave added, "God gave man the freedom of choice. He compels no one to have this new heart against his will. As the

apostle Paul stated in his second letter to the Corinthian church, 'If there be first a willing mind' (II Corinthians 8:12). You see, it becomes a personal decision. No one is forced. Each man must decide for himself.

"You've probably heard the expression 'new birth experience'. This is the point at which a change takes place. The 'old man', or the natural man who tends to do evil, now changes as a result of having the 'new heart'. He now becomes a 'new man' whose thoughts and actions tend to serve God and his fellow man. He becomes a happy, obedient Christian and thus fulfills the purpose God originally intended him to."

Dave closed the Bible and put it back on the bedside table. His roommate straightened up and said, "Yes, I do believe you've got something there. I've tried to forget the entire problem because I could never come up with a reasonable solution, nor could I find anyone else who could. But you've given me something to think about. You've supplied a few of the missing pieces. Thanks so much."

They both climbed into bed and turned out the lights. Just as Dave was about to fall asleep, his roommate said, "Say, Dave, do you have any reading matter on this subject? I'd like to go over this again."

"Sure. Yes, I can send you something as soon as I get back to college. I'll get your address in the morning and send it to you just as soon as I can."

"Good, I'll look forward to getting it. Goodnight."

Dave felt good inside. He had been able to share his faith in Jesus with two individuals that day. It seemed that the Holy Spirit had somehow given him words to speak.

"Thank You, Lord. Thank You," Dave prayed as he was about to drop off to sleep.

There was no question in Dave's mind that the prayer of reception was a powerful tool, in the hands of the Holy Spirit. It worked, and he was thankful for it.

## Chapter 6

### AGNOSTICS AND DRUNKARDS TOO!



LETTER for you, Dick," the mail carrier announced as he passed the open door.

"Great! Thanks a lot." Dick closed his book and reached for the envelope. He looked at the return address, and what he saw sent a twinge of anxiety through him. It was from his friend Charles, a young man who had spent his Easter vacation with him at La Sierra College.

Charles was an agnostic, and Dick had wondered on more than one occasion since that visit just how some of his answers had gone over with Charles. "But," he thought to himself, "how do you answer a fellow who asks questions like: 'Why do you want to be a minister?' 'What can you give the world that a humanist can't?'"

Dick remembered that he had told Charles of some personal answers to prayer in trying to answer these questions. He had told him of Dynamic Bible Living classes he had attended, and of some of the marvelous answers to prayer many of the students had experienced. For a solid hour-and-a-half they had

bantered back and forth. He wondered if he had spoken too pointedly, or perhaps been too abrupt.

With growing concern he opened the letter and began to read:

"Dear Dick:

"I have a strange feeling that I must write to you tonight. So here goes! It's about my visit with you over Easter.

"It was really a pleasure to talk with you, and the first time I've discussed religion in a long time. Since then I have thought about our conversation often.

"But what I really want to say is that I admire you. Your dedication to your convictions is something I have rarely seen in any young person.

"Although I don't agree with your beliefs, stick by them. I'm sick of all the superficiality in young people like you.

"In his book, 'You Can't Go Home Again', Thomas Wolf wrote, 'We in America are lost, but I believe we shall be found,' or something like that. Dick, I believe (and this has come to me recently) that there must be a God. This is something I really wasn't sure of at one time. But I want to find Him. I'm not sure how to do it.

"I detest salvation by works, and despise fear as a motive for serving, or trying to serve, God."

As Dick finished reading the letter, he sensed a feeling of hope. He sensed also that Charles was searching for spiritual help, and felt that with God's help he might

be used to help Charles. He resolved to keep in closer touch with his friend.

He reviewed again the visit he and friend Charles had had. He rehearsed in his mind the conversations and tried to think of anything that might have been left unsaid. He had merely witnessed to the experience he had had since he had learned the prayer of reception. He remembered the statement made in "Christ's Object Lessons", pp. 299,300:

"Far more than we do, we need to speak of the precious chapters in our experience. . . . No more effective means can be employed for winning souls to Christ."

He had done his best. Now God was doing the rest. Each day he remembered Charles in prayer, confident that the Holy Spirit would continue to have His way in his heart.

Dick had another soul-winning problem now that was absorbing much of his time. He was worried about his buddy, Don. For years they had been very close to each other, but lately Don was "goofing" around and not realizing how it was affecting him or where it was leading him. "I wish I knew how I could help him," Dick thought as he lay on his bed.

Dick and Don had been buddies through high school. They both played the trombone and had spent many pleasant hours playing and practicing together. Often they would get together just to "fool" together on their horns.

During the summer they often camped out and hiked up the mountain trails. They skied together too and played ball—just everything two young fellows enjoy doing.

Don lived with an uncle and aunt who had loved him as their own. He attended Sabbath school and church regularly, and was quite a likeable, straightforward young fellow. It was always nice to have him around.

They had come to La Sierra College to-

gether and had both applied themselves diligently to their studies. But as the year progressed, Dick began to sense a change in Don. It soon became apparent that worldly influences were gradually and steadily creeping in and crowding out the high standards that had been a part of Don's character. This troubled Dick and finally he could stand it no longer and took the problem to the Lord in prayer. He asked God to impress Don with the direction in which he was going and effect a change of Don's heart.

As it often happens, some things seem to get worse before they begin to get better. This proved true in Don's case. Before the year was over he was no longer a student, had been fired from his first job, and was planning to join the Air Force. Apparently very hopeless and forsaken, he felt he had nothing to lose.

In the meantime Dick had joined a Dynamic Living Prayer class conducted on the college campus. The wonderful answers to prayer that were related by other college students gave him courage to pray the prayer of reception for his wayward friend.

Although Don went ahead with his plans and took a four-year-hitch with the Air Force, Dick was not discouraged. He was claiming the Bible promise found in I John 5:16, that God would give Don life. And "according to" his "faith" (Matthew 9:29) his prayer was to be answered, but not in the immediate future.

Another school year was well under way, and most of the students were away for the New Year vacation, when Don showed up on the college campus. During his first month's leave from the Air Force he had decided to look up his old buddy and pay him a visit.

Dick was delighted to see him. As they talked, Dick darted a silent prayer to heaven. "Dear Lord, if I'm to help Don, and if it be

Thy will, please let him stay with me to-night."

As if Dick had spoken aloud, Don said, "I'm going to spend the night with my uncle and aunt, but I'll see you again. It's so good to be back home." And with that he was gone.

Dick returned to his room and again claimed the promise of I John 5:16. He also prayed, "Thank You, Lord, for showing me how to approach Don about his need of Thee. Thank You for giving me the wisdom You have promised in James 1:5."

He had hardly finished his prayer when a light tap on the door was heard. Dick opened the door and there stood Don. His first question was, "May I stay the night with you?"

"You surely may, Don. Come on in!" As the two of them again began to reminisce about old times, Dick thought, "God is certainly answering my prayer."

When it was convenient Dick said, "Don, I'd like to tell you about a recent experience I've had that's really dynamic. It has made Christianity come to life for me. Would you like to hear it?"

"Of course," Don replied, still interested in his pal's plans.

"You know," Dick said, "I used to think that Christianity was sort of a 'mamby-pamby' thing: but I've had a change of heart about it all. I've found something that's really great!"

Then he went on to relate some of the thrilling experiences he and others had had in answer to the prayer of reception.

Don was visibly impressed. "You may not believe me, by the way I've acted lately," he said, "but I've always been interested in religion. But like Felix in the Bible, I

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just never found the 'convenient season' to actually yield to it."

Then Don shared some of his problems and struggles and how all of these frustrated him "Really, I'm quite discouraged. I'd like to know how to be a real Christian, Dick, but I'm so sinful. I don't think there's much hope for me anymore. How can God forgive a sinner like me?"

Without saying a word in reply, Dick reached for his copy of "Steps to Christ" and shared a couple of passages with Don:

"You long to be forgiven, to be cleansed, to be set free. Harmony with God, likeness to Him, - what can you do to obtain it?"

"It is peace that you need, - Heaven's forgiveness and peace and love in the soul. ... You can never hope, by your own efforts, to secure it. But God offers it to you as a gift ... It is yours if you will but reach out your hand and grasp it."

Then Dick read from the chapter entitled, "The Privilege of Prayer," "Steps to Christ," p. 49, dealing with conditions to answered prayer.

Then from the book "Education," page 258, he read: "For the pardon of sin, for the Holy Spirit, for a Christlike temper, for wisdom and strength to do His work, for any gift He has promised, we may ask; then we are to believe that we receive, and return thanks to God that we have received."

Dick turned to Don and asked, "Wouldn't you like to claim this promise for forgiveness, right now? I'll help you."

Don agreed, and so the two of them knelt together with the Bible opened to 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

At first Don found it hard to ask for forgiveness and cleansing. But when he let the Holy Spirit take charge, he was thrilled. And the words, "I thank You for forgiving me," came from a sincere heart.

As they rose from their knees, both young men had a deeper appreciation of the Bible and for the wonderful love of a wonderful Saviour.

"I'm so glad I came to visit you, Dick. I know my life is going to be different as a result of it," Don said gratefully.

"You're not half as glad as I am, Don. Let's determine now, that if we don't meet again here on this earth, we'll meet each other in heaven. O.K.?"

"It's a deal, Dick," and the two of them shook hands, both beaming with Christian happiness."

Then there was Alicia, another youthful soul-winner and a member of the prayer class. Her enthusiasm and smiling face greatly encouraged the other members of the prayer class as she related her experience in the Lord. A definite answer to prayer for her sister was just realized, and Alicia was bubbling over with enthusiasm. She wanted to share her experience.

Alicia had been concerned over her sister June's lack of interest in the church. She virtually never attended. And lately she had expressed much doubt as to the validity of the Bible and it's account of the miracles.

"It's ridiculous!" she told Alicia, "for anyone to believe that a sea could open up and make a path for people to walk through. It's just a fairy tale. You'll never get me to believe all that stuff in the Bible."

At the first meeting of the prayer class, Alicia learned how to claim a promise for a backslidden church member. She was so impressed with all she heard that she decided



to pray for this sister, claiming the promise given in I John 5:16, "He shall ask, and He (God) shall give him life."

One week went by; then two. Twice a day and every night Alicia prayed for June. She loved her sister and wanted so much to see her enjoying a good Christian experience. Three weeks passed with no apparent sign that God was hearing her prayers.

But Alicia never wavered or became discouraged. She had been taught that while God does not force the will, it is part of His wonderful gospel to free the will. This truth is taught throughout the entire Bible. When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, Satan used a kind of hypnotic power over them. To give them hope, God promised to "put enmity" between Satan and the human race, Gen. 3:15. This is one of the functions of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. He promises, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed", John 8:36. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Hebrews 2:14-15.

Jesus was sent "to preach deliverance to the captives; to set at liberty them that are bruised." Luke 4:18. Therefore, Alicia prayed a prayer of faith. She prayed in Jesus' name and by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, supplicating the throne of grace for a backslider. Can it be that God will not answer the prayer He Himself has inspired us to offer? Is not the reason Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint praying, because he knows that "heavenly angels who excel in strength" will drive him off the real

battlefield of the will of man and leave him free to choose to serve God? She had learned at one of the meetings of the prayer class several general conditions to answered prayer, and one of these was perseverance. During the fourth week of claiming the promise, Alicia was much encouraged. One night, as she was talking to her father, he said, "You can't imagine how much June has changed! Why that sister of yours is even planning to go back to church!"

Alicia was elated! On Wednesday June came over to see Alicia. "Sis," she said, "when are you going to make another one of my favorite nut roasts? Why don't you make one for this Sabbath? We can go to church and have dinner together afterwards. O.K.?" "And sure enough," Alicia said as she finished telling her thrilling experience to the class, "she was with me in church last Sabbath! This is a definite answer to my prayer."

We must also share with you the experience of Lila, another soul-winner. Before her experience in Jesus she had been a slave to many evil habits.

"I was so ashamed," she wrote, "I could not look my people or my friends in the face. Just think of it! I had been using snuff and coffee since I was five. And for years I had been a drunkard, spending all my earnings for these vices and letting my Lord go."

"I fought myself, trying to stop my degrading habits, but it was useless. Several times I felt like giving up completely. I felt lost without God and without a friend in the world."

"Then, God sent you and your wife to see me at just the right time. Now God has given me complete victory over everything. How I



prayed for a hatred of my sins' and I received it. I have no more desire to use tobacco or drink any kind of alcohol since we prayed the prayer of reception the night you came.

"I am overjoyed with this new way of life. It's wonderful to know for myself that God will answer prayer so quickly! I give my Lord all the credit for the victory! More than this, I'm going to share this wonderful experience and this new prayer life with everyone, wherever I go.

"May God continue to use you to share with many others this powerful approach to God.

"Sincerely,  
"Lila"

Lila became one of the most successful soul-winners we ever met. Many of her dear friends have testified that Lila is truly a victorious Christian. She continues to be victorious because she is constantly sharing her experience and thanking God for what He has done for her.

From a hopeless drunkard to a gloriously happy Christian! What hath God wrought!

The amazing thing is that He is waiting to do the same for you! Can you believe that?

Let your faith go, and try it!

## Chapter 7

### SWEETHEARTS AGAIN



TOM AND Evelyn Black were in trouble—serious trouble. Like many other ambitious young couples with the husband seeking an education, our Evelyn was the "bread winner", the silent partner, so to speak.

Her work was of such a nature that it kept her secluded. She did not make many friends because she just never met many students. When Tom and Evelyn walked together across the campus or attended the college entertainments, friends would stop and speak to Tom and practically ignore Evelyn. This unfair situation was giving her an inferiority complex, and was also weakening her spiritual life.

Hugh and Lucy James were quite concerned about the situation; so much so that they and another couple met together to discuss what could be done about the unhappy relationship they observed developing between Tom and Evelyn. They concluded that what Evelyn needed was another job where she could meet more people, or perhaps take some class

work so as to be exposed to the rest of the student body.

But coming up with some suggestions is one thing; implementing them, quite another. Frustrated as to how to implement their ideas, and realizing it was next to impossible, Hugh and Lucy decided to forget the whole matter.

I wonder—did they ask God for guidance? Did they bring this young couple before God in prayer? Or was this a case of "leaning unto" their "own understanding", Proverbs 3:5?

Hugh and Lucy may have forgotten Tom and Evelyn's problem, but God did not; for He says in Isaiah 49:15,16, "Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands."

"He would have us understand how earnestly and tenderly His heart yearns over us in all our trials and temptations."—"Gospel Workers", p. 210.

God also says, "I will guide thee with mine eye", Psalms 32:8. And He did truly guide Tom and Evelyn again straight to Hugh and Lucy's door.

They had heard of the James' many fabulous experiences of answered prayer. Perhaps among these they might find a solution to their problem.

As Hugh and Lucy shared their experiences and conditions of answered prayer with Tom and Evelyn, they also explained the difference between presumption and faith. For one to claim Bible promises without fulfilling the conditions would be presumption. It would also be presumption for them to use the answer to prayer for selfish purposes instead of God's cause. An inspired writer states: "Whatever we receive must be used in doing His will. The conditions met, the promise is unequivocal."—"Education", p. 258.

After this discussion, the two couples fell on their knees before the open Bible as suggested in "Christ's Object Lessons", page 147. They claimed, through Jesus Christ, the fulfillment of God's promise as found in Philippians 4:19. They ASKED, Matthew 7:7. They BELIEVED, and told God they believed He would do just as He had promised, Mark 11:24.

"Say, 'I will believe, I do believe.'"—"Testimonies", Vol. 5, page 514. Then they did what "Steps to Christ" suggests: "Thank God that we have received," page 51 (Army-Navy edition).

A few weeks later Tom and Evelyn were seen strolling hand in hand across the wide college campus.

"Just like sweethearts again," thought Lucy as she and Hugh were watching them. "The Lord has surely answered our prayers," commented Hugh.

"I wonder if anything new has developed!" remarked Lucy. "Let's go ask them."

Evelyn was first to answer. "The Lord doesn't want me to go downtown to work. He's given me a job in the library for the summer. He wants me to go to college, and I have already registered. Tom has a job too; one that can be fitted in around his classes when college begins this fall."

Then came the most thrilling news of all. Tom was to receive three dollars an hour at a time when seventy-five cents was the usual wage.

Thus had the Lord answered all their prayers of faith so Evelyn could go to college. She made many friends with both students and teachers.

Evelyn and Tom were now supremely happy. As they walked about the campus, arm in arm, they reminded one of two angels walking on earth.

I think one of the most wonderful marital miracles was the one of which Paul Jones was a part. Truly God "worketh miracles among you." Galatians 3:5.

Handsome, keen-minded, and kind-hearted Paul had seemed to be one who would some day be an outstanding leader. With a devoted wife and four lovely children, he had every prospect of being a strong worker for the Lord.

Then the devil stepped in with an overwhelming temptation. And Paul Jones began to slip spiritually. His young friends became concerned. A group of them met together to claim promises and to pray for him.

"Dear Lord, we claim the promise of I John 5:16. And according to this promise, we ask You to give Paul Jones life. We believe You are giving backslider Paul life, and we return thanks that You have given Paul Jones life. In Jesus' name, Amen."

And was Paul Jones given life? Of course! When God says, "I will," He always keeps His word. "There hath not failed one word of all his good promise." I Kings 8:56.

But it took time. Instead of Paul Jones turning his back and fleeing from evil, he became completely infatuated with the wife of a fellow church member.

Content to be with each other, Paul and Della were so blinded by the wiles of Satan that they left their families and went to another state. Paul actually appeared to be going from bad to worse, until some of his friends gave up all hope for him.

Others decided they could no longer pray the prayer of reception in his case. Their faith wavered as they looked at appearances and not at the promise of I John 5:16. Of them God said, "He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he

shall receive any thing of the Lord." James 1:6,7.

Paul and Della entered another country for a quick divorce from their former mates. Living together as man and wife, they both declared to their saddened Christian friends that they never felt so near to God. The love they felt for each other, they said, was divine.

I do not know when I have witnessed a more apparently hopeless case. In spite of the hours I had previously taken to dissuade Paul from plunging into this life of sin, this serious condition worsened so fast that some questioned me: "Why has this happened when we were claiming I John 5:16?"

My answer to them was, "Keep claiming the promise."

Although the case of Paul Jones appeared utterly hopeless, not all who knew him declared it to be so. His faithful friends, Mary and Lynn, continued to pray, "Lord, we return thanks that You have given Paul life according to the promise of I John 5:16."

With great faith in their heavenly Father they also opened their Bibles and claimed the promise in Genesis 3:15, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman." Then they did as we are told to do in "Christ's Object Lessons", page 147: "With your Bible in your hands say, We 'have done as Thou hast said.' We 'present Thy promise.'"

At least three times a day Lynn claimed both promises, and occasionally he added Isaiah 42:16, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight, . . . and not forsake them."

Although most of Paul's friends considered him as "incurable", Lynn would not give up. How could he when he had already re-

turned thanks to God that he had received the answer?

His faith and confidence had so grown by this time that he even went so far as to say, "I'll guarantee that Paul and Della will not stay together. The promise I'm claiming is Genesis 3:15. It has never failed. That's why I can guarantee that Paul and Della will not, can not, stay together! They may even marry, but they won't stay together!"

Do you think Lynn was presumptuous in making such bold statements? Before you answer in the affirmative, let me share with you the following from S. D. Gordon in his work "Quiet Talks on Prayer":

"One of the questions that is more often asked in this connection than any other perhaps is this: may we pray with assurance for the conversion of our loved ones? No question sets more hearts in an audience to beating faster than does that. I remember speaking in the Boston noonday meeting, in the old Broomfield Street M. E. Church, on this subject one week. Perhaps I was speaking rather positively. And at the close of the meeting one day a keen, cultured Christian woman whom I knew came up for a word. She said, 'I do not think we can pray like that.' And I said, 'Why not?' She paused a moment, and her well-controlled agitation revealed in eye and lip told me how deeply her thoughts were stirred. Then she said quietly, 'I have a brother. He is not a Christian. The theatre, the wine, the club, the cards—that is his life. And he laughs at me. I would rather than anything else that my brother were a Christian. But,' she said, and here both her keenness and the training of her early teaching came in, 'I do not think I can pray positively for his conversion, for he is a free agent, is he not? And God will not save a man against his will.'

"I want to say to you to-day what I said to her. Man is a free agent, to use the old phrase, so far as God is concerned; utterly, wholly free. And, he is the most enslaved agent on the earth, so far as sin, and selfishness and prejudice are concerned. The purpose of our praying is not to force or coerce his will; never that. It is to free his will of the warping influences that now twist it awry. It is to get the dust out of his eyes so his sight shall be clear. And once he is free, able to see aright, to balance things without prejudice, the whole probability is in favour of his using his will to choose the only right.

"I want to suggest to you the ideal prayer for such a one. It is an adaptation of Jesus' own words. It may be pleaded with much variety of detail. It is this: deliver him from the evil one; and work in him Thy will for him, by Thy power to Thy glory in Jesus, the Victor's name. And there are three special passages upon which to base this prayer. First Timothy, second chapter, fourth verse (American version), 'God our Saviour, who would have all men to be saved.' That is God's will for your loved one. Second Peter, third chapter, ninth verse, 'not wishing (or willing) that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.' That is God's will, or desire, for the one you are thinking of now. The third passage is on our side who do the praying. It tells who may offer this prayer with assurance. John, fifteenth chapter, seventh verse, 'If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you ask what it is your will to ask, and I will bring it to pass for you'" (pp. 191-193).

To go on with our story of Della and Paul. About six weeks later a penitent Della made a long-distance telephone call to her husband

Jack. But when she asked, "Honey, will you take me back?" Jack, quite cool and collected, answered, "Well, I'll think it over and let you know."

"Another problem?" thought Lynn when Jack told him the next morning. "The Lord has surely answered our prayers, but if Jack won't accept it as such, what have we gained?"

Realizing that the Lord had placed upon him the responsibility of bringing hope to Jack, Lynn determined to learn and follow the seven laws of soul-winning. These laws also apply to counseling.

He read in "Christ's Object Lessons", page 149: "Personal effort for others should be preceded by much secret prayer, for it requires great wisdom to understand the science of saving souls."

Still claiming the promises in I John 5:16, Genesis 3:15, and Isaiah 42:16, Lynn now turned to James 1:5 and accepted the wisdom that was there for him.

He knew he had to be extremely careful, because Jack had already stated, "I don't think I'll take her back."

In the meantime Paul Jones, deeply repentant, wrote to his friend Hugh, who had also been faithful in claiming the promise in I John 5:16. In a sad, lengthy letter he admitted his great wrong. He also said, "I am writing my wife Ardyth to ask her to take me back."

Lynn continued to visit Jack, trying to inspire him, with God's help, to change his mind and call Della and tell her to come home.

The next three weeks seemed a long time to Lynn while the Holy Spirit was working on the hearts of Jack and Ardyth. They each had a serious decision to make. The future of

the children in both families had to be considered, as well as other major problems.

Then, one evening, Jack reached for the telephone. His decision had been made. And a few days later one family was reunited.

Shortly afterward, Paul Jones, a wiser and more humble man, returned to the arms of his wife and children.

When the suggestion is made to me that we cannot have assurance as we pray for a backslider because he has the power of choice, I reply: "I have never yet seen a backslider who chose to be lost. I have met some crimson sinners, like Paul. I have observed many whose attitudes gave one the impression that they loved sin. But when it comes to choosing to be lost, not even Paul Jones had made such a decision. Paul was a captive, but God sent angels to the battleground of his heart and the evil angels were cast out. Then Paul Jones chose, not merely life, but a life of righteousness.

Because "God stands back of every promise He has made" ("Christ's Object Lessons", p. 147), and because faithful friends held on to the arm of Omnipotence, two homes have been salvaged and rebuilt.

And what is the testimony of those reunited? "By the grace of God, and with His help, our misunderstandings and problems are being ironed out. We have never been happier in our lives!"

## Chapter 8

### MODERN DAY MIRACLES



"E'LL NEVER be the same," were the words of Sue Winner when she and her husband Frank came to visit me one day. They were rejoicing and praising the Lord for the miraculous answers to prayer He had given them during the past six months.

Frank Winner had faced financial bankruptcy. He had had three business failures. He was without a job. The finance company was about to foreclose on his home. The utility bills were all in arrears. At times there was not even any bread in the cupboard. On top of all of these problems Frank and Sue were entertaining the idea of separation because of incompatibility.

The picture had become so dark that Sue found herself in tears in church repeatedly. Things were at an impasse. Both Frank and Sue decided that it was impossible for them to live together under the present circumstances. But "man's extremity is God's opportunity."

About that time Frank began to attend a class in the Prayer of Reception conducted by Hugh James at Angwin Hall on the La Sierra College campus. He was obviously frustrated, but Hugh treated him kindly. In fact Hugh gave Frank so much of his time that I tried diplomatically to encourage Hugh not to let people divert too much of his time from his college work, and also from the important prayer classes he was supervising.

But it soon became evident that the time Hugh spent with Frank was beginning to produce fruit. Never before, in his entire life, had Frank had an answer to prayer. Now he began to receive answers--almost daily. It was just like a miracle!

There was the time the water was turned off, as Sue told it to me:

"A notice came one day telling us that the water would be turned off in five days if the bill wasn't paid. It was read and duly filed with all the other long-overdue bills. In all of our pressing problems it was soon forgotten.

"Five days later when I turned on the faucet to fill the tub so I could do a washing, no water came out. The very silence of that particular faucet, which had always played a drip, drip, drip, should have told me that something was wrong, even before I tried to turn it on. For now it was silent.

"At any rate, I ran next door to find out whether they were having a water problem. No problem there. They had all the water they needed, so it wasn't a broken line. I decided to call the water company and find out what was wrong. To my chagrin they said, 'We shut the water off. Didn't you receive the cutoff notice?' I told them I hadn't. Then something pricked my memory. I looked to make sure, and there filed neatly away among the unpaid bills was the notice.



"What was I going to do? There wasn't any money to pay the bill, much less the turn-on charge. Maybe God would help Frank get hold of some cash. So I knelt down in prayer and claimed the promise in Philippians 4:19, 'My God shall supply all your need.' I said, 'Dear God, You know we have NEED of water. Please help Frank get some cash today so this bill can be paid. I believe You are helping Frank to get hold of some money, and thank You for it. In Jesus' name, Amen.' As I rose from my knees I saw I would have to hurry or I would be late to work.

"That night, upon arriving home, sweet music greeted my ears. Drip, drip, drip! I thanked the Lord right then for helping Frank get some money to pay the water bill.

"When Frank arrived home, I asked him where he had gotten the money."

"What money?" Frank exclaimed.

"Well, didn't you pay the water bill?" I asked.

"Why, no!"

"Well, how did the bill get paid then? It was turned off this morning when I went to do the washing, but that drip, drip, drip tells me the bill has been paid.

"The mystery was soon solved. The next door neighbor came over and handed Frank a receipt. 'Your water bill is paid,' he said. 'I had to go pay my bill today, so I just paid yours too. You can worry about paying me back when you get on your feet financially,' he said.

Then with a smile, Sue continued, "God was good. He didn't answer my prayer the way I expected with cash, but He did answer it. From that I learned a very valuable lesson. Never try to tell God HOW to answer your prayers. He has a thousand ways, of which we know nothing. No, we'll never be

the same. Our trust in our heavenly Father is growing by leaps and bounds."

Then Sue told me of the time there was no bread in the house and no money to buy any. But she found some oatmeal flour and what she thought was wholewheat flour, but later found it was buckwheat pancake flour. Then she found some dried yeast in the back of the refrigerator that was over a year old, according to the expiration date.

"It was all I had," Sue said, "and so I claimed the promise of Philippians 4:19 and decided to make some bread with what I had and leave the results with God.

"I proceeded to make the bread dough. This was not the procedure I generally followed when making bread; but then, it seemed nothing was following its usual procedure these days. I watched the dough rise, fascinated with the fact that God was answering my prayer right before my eyes.

"When the bread was done a more delicious loaf I never tasted! Truly God does provide as He has promised if we have fulfilled all the conditions He has laid down."

But Frank and Sue were still faced with many problems. Many times Frank was ready to declare bankruptcy and forget it all.

One day Frank came over to inquire of me what course he should follow. My answer was, "I have had many financial problems too, but as serious as they were, I did not have to go bankrupt. I always claimed Philippians 4:19, 'My God shall supply all your need.'"

With a sigh of relief, Frank replied, "That's my answer, too."

Later Frank claimed this promise, and the wholesome manner in which He asked, believed, and claimed by returning thanks that he HAD received, was most inspiring. Frank told me how he had knelt down, with his Bible open, and prayed in childlike simplicity, claiming

Philippians 4:19. Then he had returned thanks to God that he HAD received a job.

And, bless his heart, after four long months of grinding trial, God gave Frank a job which averaged more than two hundred dollars take-home pay per week. Although the job is seasonal, and the pay isn't always this high, Frank and Sue have learned to trust their heavenly Father.

At the time when Frank first got the job, a notice came saying that the finance company was going to foreclose on their house. Frank went to the finance office and was informed that he must immediately catch up on all the six hundred dollars that he was in arrears, or the house would be sold to the highest bidder. Frank told them he could now keep up the present payments of ninety-five dollars a month and also pay one hundred and five dollars on the delinquent bill. He offered to pay two hundred dollars a month for a period of six months. But the finance company was adamant and wanted the entire amount NOW! All or nothing!

Frank had Someone more powerful than a finance company working with him. Frank and Sue had claimed two promises from God's word concerning their home: Philippians 4:19, and Jeremiah 33:3, "I will . . . shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not." They had knelt and asked, believed, and returned thanks that they HAD received their home. They had faith to believe that the finance company would not be allowed to foreclose on their home. But they had to do something quickly. Time was of an essence.

Frank was impressed to go to the Veterans Administration office and lay his problem before the man in charge. Then things started humming! The man called the finance company, took Frank's house out of their hands, and wrote Frank up a new contract with payments

of only one hundred and twenty-five dollars a month instead of the two hundred dollars Frank had offered to pay.

This answer to their prayer had happened in a matter of moments. It was something that would ordinarily have taken months to complete.

Truly, this is a story of modern day miracles, demonstrating that God is ready and willing to do for His obedient and believing children "great and mighty things, which thou knowest not."

Esther and Eli are happy for a good neighbor. Sometimes the Lord uses neighbors like Mrs. Garrison to bring answers to prayers. At least He did in this case.

Esther was baptized and became a member of the Seventh-day Adventist church as the result of the prayers and efforts of members of the prayer class. With two small children and expecting the third soon, it was inevitable that a washing machine of some kind would have to be purchased. But they had no money.

Mrs. Garrison, the good neighbor, heard about it, and went over to see Eli and Esther, saying, "Let's pray about it."

Claiming the promise in III John 2, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper . . ." Then they thanked the Lord for hearing them and awaited the answer.

Later, Mrs. Garrison, passing by the College Market, was impressed to stop and read the ads on the bulletin board.

"FOR SALE," she read, "NEW KENMORE AUTOMATIC WASHER-DRIER."

She knew that Esther and Eli could hardly afford the old type washer, let alone one like this one; but faith was strong and she



was soon talking to the owner on the telephone.

Yes, she still had it, and would be glad for them to see it. She was asking one hundred dollars for it. Mrs. Garrison explained the situation and plans were made for them to see it.

Like most women, Esther was excited over the prospects of owning an automatic washer for the first time in her life! But when her eyes beheld it, she exclaimed, "Oh! What a beautiful machine! We could never afford one like this!"

How the Lord must delight in opening the windows of heaven and showering blessings and happiness upon His children. The lady looked at Esther and said, "I've just been offered one hundred and fifty dollars cash for this machine, but I'm willing to let you have it for twenty-five dollars.

"Did you say one hundred and twenty-five dollars?" Esther asked.

"No, I said twenty-five dollars."

Esther was so excited she was almost in tears. "Only God would do such a thing for me," she exclaimed.

Eli was almost as happy as Esther. They paid the lady and then Eli immediately began to see about the installation. To his great dismay he discovered that the house had not been wired for the type of service they needed to operate the machine they had just purchased.

This posed a real problem not easily solved. Eli began to wonder, "Now, why would God do a thing like that? He allowed us to buy a washer we can't use!"

Again the good neighbor came to the rescue. "Eli," she said, "didn't I hear you talking about finding another house?"

"Yes," replied Eli, "we've been talking about it."

"All right," said Mrs. Garrison, "we'll just ask the Lord for a house for you."

A few days later Eli came home with some exciting news. He had found a house that he liked very much. There was only one thing wrong. The deposit was fifty dollars. There was something else that was not too good, either. The monthly rent was one hundred and twenty-five dollars, which he knew was too expensive for him. He had already anticipated what Mrs. Garrison was going to say about this problem!

His faith and confidence in God were growing. So this time when they knelt to pray, Eli sent up a prayer of his own. He prayed, "Lord, since You made the price of the washer come down, I know You can do the same with the house. If it be Thy will, may the rent be lowered to be within our means?"

Back went Eli, thinking about that fine house and hoping and believing that he would occupy it one day soon. And God did for him just what He promises to do for all, "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." Psalms 37: 4.

The owner brought the deposit down to twenty dollars and said that the rent would be one hundred and five dollars a month instead of the original one hundred and twenty-five dollars.

True it is that when we obey God's requirements, "God stands back of every promise He has made."--Christ's Object Lessons, p. 147.

A very dear friend of ours, Dorothy Robison, wrote these words:

"My daughter's school bill was high. Realizing that she could not take her nine-weeks' test until it was paid, I prayed and

claimed the promise, 'My God shall supply all your need.' Philippians 4:19.

"My husband and I dedicated our Income Tax refund toward this bill. We thought it would amount to one hundred and nineteen dollars, but we received only seventy-nine dollars. I was greatly disappointed, to say the least, but we managed to scrape together a little more money and the school allowed my daughter to take her tests, although the bill was not paid in full.

"Last year I had performed some services for which I received a fifty dollar gift. I assumed that the same amount would be forthcoming for the same services this year. This, also, I had dedicated toward the school bill.

"A few days ago I received a letter containing the gift. Instead of fifty dollars, it was only ten dollars. I was really discouraged, and shed a few tears. I know the Bible says we ought to 'leap for joy', Luke 6:23, when trials come, but I was ready to leap in anger. There was bitterness, resentment and discouragement in my heart.

"I said, 'Why, Lord, why?' I was not really accepting the trial which the Lord had allowed to come to me. I went around all that evening talking discouragement. I was discouraging everybody.

"During the night I realized I was doing Satan's work, and I asked the Lord for forgiveness. A peace came over me, and I know, mentally at least, what it was to 'leap for joy'. The Lord took away the bitterness and discouragement. I didn't know where the money was coming from, but I felt that the Lord would provide, and with this I went to sleep.

"The following day another letter came containing a forty dollar check. It said that a mistake had been made and this was the balance of the fifty dollars that was due me.

I then realized why the Lord had delayed this money in coming. He was testing my faith, and endeavoring to strengthen me.

"I praised the Lord that the bitterness and disappointment had been taken from my heart before He supplied the need. The bill is still not completely paid, but I have faith that the Lord will supply the rest of the money, even as He has promised. I know the bill will be paid in time for my daughter to take her final exams."

Dorothy sent me this postscript a few days later: "Not only has the Lord provided for the payment of the old school bill, but He has given my daughter a job for the summer which will pay almost all of her next year's school bill as well! Truly the Lord has supplied all my need, abundantly, more than I could ask or think. Praise His name! Never again will I ever hesitate to 'leap for JOY' when trouble comes my way. I know the Lord will see me through."

Out of the depths of her experience, Dorothy has written a poem (which has been set to music), and gave us permission to share it with our readers. It follows:

#### BELIEVE GOD'S PROMISES

Do not fail nor be discouraged,  
As you walk the upward way;  
For the loving arms of Jesus  
Are about you as you pray.  
As you kneel before your Maker,  
Open now your heart to Him;  
Tell Him of your trials and sorrows,  
Ask Him to forgive each sin.

Kneeling there in calm submission,  
Let your eyes toward heav'n look;  
Ask God's Spirit now to guide you,  
As you open wide His Book.

Tell Him of you joys and pleasures,  
Tell Him of each trial and care;  
And then read each precious promise,  
He has written for you there.

Thou art precious to the Saviour,  
On the cross He died for you;  
All your past mistakes are covered;  
Jesus' life hides them from view.  
He has promised to forgive you;  
He has covered every sin;  
He has promised life eternal;  
He has promised strength to win.

Turn, and read each precious promise,  
And take courage now, anew;  
For this is the voice of Jesus;  
And it's speaking now, to you.  
As you hear the voice of Jesus,  
You may claim each promise true;  
And then thank Him for the answer,  
He has written there for you.

Ask, believe, and claim each promise,  
Knowing God will do His part;  
And you'll find a sweet peace filling  
Each chamber of your heart.  
God has given you the answer,  
Sing a song of praise and love;  
And when Jesus comes in glory,  
He will take you home above.

--Dorothy Robison  
December, 1960

## Chapter 9

### STRANGER THAN FICTION



HERE IS an old adage that says, "Never underestimate the power of a woman." After experiencing first hand the determination of many sisters in claiming certain Bible promises, I believe there is something to it.

There is also a statement penned by my favorite author in the book "Evangelism", page 647, that tells us: "The interests of Christ's kingdom call for diligence and faithfulness." Again in Volume 5 of the "Testimonies", page 109, she says, "Fervent prayer, humility, and earnestness must be combined with God's help."

Nina was a combination of all of these as she and her husband Ken knelt together to bring a serious problem before the Lord. She had her Bible opened to Matthew 21:22 which says, "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." Husband Ken suggested, just before they prayed, "This will be a prayer of commitment, of course."

"No," Nina answered with determination, "this will be a prayer of reception."

"But, Honey," Ken argued, "we just can't tell God what to do. I know we need the money we would have gotten for this job, but one doesn't paint in a heavy rain storm. You know that!"

"Yes, Dear, I know that you can't paint while it's raining. But it isn't going to rain! Even if the weather forecast does say so, God can and will hold back the storm. So, let's ASK, BELIEVE, and CLAIM this promise in Matthew 21 so we can also bring Malachi 3:8-10 before God. He means what He says in Mark 11:24. 'What things so ever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them,' doesn't He?"

"Yes," Ken answered, still not fully convinced, but weakening a little under his Nina's earnest reasoning, "let's pray a prayer of reception and thank Him for holding back the rain."

"I overheard them arguing there on their knees--a rather strange procedure", confided Nina's father, who was visiting them at the time. 'But neither Ken nor I were aware of the desperate situation that Nina had gotten into. Neither did we know that many others were also involved.'"

Nina was so right when she argued that God means what He says. She believed that the promised blessings in Malachi 3:8-10 were given on a strictly conditional basis. Especially did she know this because of the recent experience through which they were even then passing.

A few months previous Ken and Nina had received a terrible disappointment from an unsuccessful business adventure in the East. In fact, it was so frustrating to Nina, the family treasurer, that, even though the tithe check had been written, she decided not to

mail it, because their bank account was depleted.

As a result, God could not keep His part of the bargain made in Malachi 3, and one thing after another occurred to keep Nina from repaying the full amount of back tithe.

Instead of being "the head, and not the tail" or "above . . . and not beneath," as the Lord promised in Deuteronomy 28:11-14, Ken and Nina were two months behind with the house rent and one month in arrears with the utilities. They had also received notice from the college that Ken could not matriculate for the second semester unless the eighty dollars he owed was paid, plus an advance on the next semester's tuition.

Things had finally come to a crisis. Nina realized that something must be done immediately. Although she and Ken tried to conceal their weighty problem from their friends and close associates, they were getting more and more concerned over the matter. Nina reasoned, "How can Ken continue to teach others the prayer of reception with its specific conditions, one of which is tithing, when I am failing to comply?" The outlook was anything but hopeful.

On the day that Ken and his working partner were scheduled to do a paint job for a party in Santa Monica, the drenching rain was forecast and they received word not to come.

No work meant no pay. No pay check meant no food, no bills paid, including the back tithe.

Instead of worrying Ken by speaking of their problem, Nina quietly went to the only Source of help she knew. She had already told the Lord that the back tithe would be paid from the money received from this promised work in Santa Monica. Now she began to reason with God as He has asked all of His children to do (Isaiah 1:18).

"Dear Lord," she said, "You've promised that You will never go back on Your Word; that each and every one of us can trust in You completely. And so it doesn't seem quite fair for us to fail in fulfilling our promise to You. I promised to pay back all the tithe that we owe from this day's work. But it will be impossible for me to keep my word to You if the rainstorm reaches Santa Monica as it has been predicted. Dear Lord, as You calmed the storm on the Sea of Galilee, You can hold back, or change the course of the storm that is threatening to keep me from fulfilling my promise to You. I know that You can do this, for Thy name's honor and glory, and I believe that You will do it, and so I thank You for doing it. In Jesus' name, Amen."

This, then, was the just cause for Nina's great determination as she disputed with Ken over the type of prayer they should use. "If ever I heard my daughter speak with firmness," testified her father, "it was that morning as they were on their knees."

Ken gave in for the sake of peace, but his heart was not in this prayer of reception. Yet, he and his partner Royal were soon on their way to Santa Monica.

As they traveled along the freeway, Ken and Royal discussed the foolishness of their wives. (Royal's wife, Vina, had also prayed that it might not rain.) Under the circumstances they were still of the opinion that they should have prayed a prayer of commitment and not a prayer of reception. They fully expected to see the dark storm-clouds roll in from the ocean with the two inches of predicted rain.

God was honoring Nina's prayer of faith, for when Ken and Royal arrived at Santa Monica after the one-hundred-mile drive, the storm had not yet appeared. All that day

they worked long and hard, expecting to pack up and return home at any time. When the lady for whom they were working remarked, "Someone at USC (University of Southern California) must have prayed for good weather for today's graduation," Ken and Royal suddenly came to the realization that they knew who that "someone" was.

They had to admit that the prayer Nina had prayed that morning was a prayer of reception, for truly they received an answer.

The next day was Friday, and the young painters were on the job at seven o'clock in the morning, and did not stop working until two o'clock in the afternoon. They left shortly thereafter so as to give them plenty of time to get ready for the approaching Sabbath hours.

The following appeared on the front page of the Los Angeles Times of January 28, 1966:

#### "No Rain

#### "FORECASTING GOOF BLAMED ON COMPUTER

"That predicted heavy rain that never arrived Thursday in Los Angeles was based in good measure on forecasts from a computer, near Washington, D. C.—and the computer goofed.

"But Weather Bureau forecasters here won't let the mechanical brain take all the blame.

"We goofed, too," John Frazee admitted. "But we talked it over and decided if we had to do it all over again, we would have forecast the very same heavy rains."

#### "Pours on Catalina

"After all, he pointed out, it was pouring on Catalina Island, where almost an inch of rain fell Wednesday night and early Thursday before the storm swerved south.

"Frazee said it would be a sheer guess at this point as to what caused the weather system to change, but he noted that the staff

'wasn't all wet' since southern and western Los Angeles had showers. So did coastal areas from Long Beach to San Diego . . .

"The storm that was misread late Wednesday was less than 100 miles at sea."

That evening other types of prayers ascended to the God of heaven, prayers of praise and thanksgiving. They praised the One who loves to "cooperate with all who strive to do His will" (Prophets and Kings, page 587). "He also will hear their cry, and will save them" (Psalms 145:19).

Enough money came in for Nina to pay all the back tithe. Since she now had no reason to pray another prayer of reception, she left the weather in the Lord's hands. On Sunday Ken and Nina could again sing, "There shall be showers of blessings . . ." as the storm passed over La Sierra in drenching torrents.

When my wife and I were holding meetings in the Los Angeles, California area, the weather forecast indicated one day it would be one of the coldest nights of the year.

Assistant Professor Lee Davis, in charge of the crop division of agriculture at La Sierra College, was worried. His alfalfa crop, on which several thousand dollars had been spent, was at a stage of growth where a frost would kill it off. If this happened, it would have to be replanted at great cost and loss of time.

Lee had been learning about the prayer of reception from Hugh James. As they met together for prayer that night, Hugh suggested that they claim the promise found in Malachi 3:10,11. Then, since all conditions had been fulfilled, they could see the Lord work miraculously to save the alfalfa field.

The two of them knelt down and claimed

the promise: "Bring ye all the tithe into the storehouse, . . . and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts . . . And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes." Malachi 3:10,11.

The next morning Lee again claimed the promise. On his way to church he stopped and looked at the alfalfa. The field was solid white with frost, from one end of the field to the other. Being an agricultural specialist, he knew, or thought he knew, that the crop was lost—destroyed.

But his faith in God did not waver. God would surely fulfill His promise in some way, so Lee bent over and touched the leaves. The ice melted away under his fingers. What he saw made him take a second look. The leaves showed no damage! They were perfect!

With a thankful heart he went on to Sabbath School and church. That afternoon the sun came out from behind the clouds and Lee examined the leaves again. By now the frost was all melted and he could see very clearly that God had answered his prayer of faith. There was no damage to the crop—none whatsoever!

The next night was colder than the one before. However, not a single plant in the entire alfalfa field was damaged by frost. Later that day, Lee learned from the seed representative about a neighboring farmer who had planted his alfalfa seed the same day Lee had. Both crops had reached the same stage of growth and development. Yet, while the farmer lost almost three-fourths of his alfalfa crop, and Lee's coworker lost a hardy lemon tree because of the frost, the Lord protected the alfalfa field Lee Davis prayed for.

"He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Hebrews 11:6.



About the same time I received the following experience from two other friends, John and Joan.

John and Joan have four little children. In this modern age of high-cost-of-living, and the many demands that are constantly and ever present, we sometimes can not afford some of the "wants" that our families would like.

John works for a very fine man who sells house-trailers. When a sale is made it is up to John to hook the trailer to his truck and haul it to wherever the customer wants it. He may be on the road for several hours, or he may be away from home for several days. But he accepts his work cheerfully, grateful to a loving God for His protection and constant care of his family.

Not too many weeks ago business seemed to slacken somewhat, and these two Christian parents, who had always paid a faithful tithe, seemed to forget a certain rule that God made for all His children. This rule says, "Prove me now . . ." (Malachi 3:10). It also says, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse."

But instead of proving God, they decided to work things out in their own way, and they would "borrow" some of the tithe money. Just for a while they would not pay a full tithe.

Things did not get any better. The little that was "borrowed" did not seem to help a bit, and the next pay check just would not stretch over all their needs. And so it went on.

About this time the young people were beginning another series of classes on the prayer of reception. Although John was not able to attend because of the uncertainty of his working hours, Joan made up her mind that she would be there whenever possible, and she received much encouragement.

By this time business and other problems

had come to the place where something just had to be done about it. One evening John and Joan made a very important decision. From the next pay check all the tithe would be paid, present and past, and they would prove God and let Him take care of the future.

"The Lord has compassion upon us in our fallen condition, and accompanies His commands with promises," wrote the Lord's messenger. "He calls upon His people to prove Him, declaring that He will reward obedience with the richest blessings" (Southern Watchman, Feb. 14, 1905).

True to their word, John and Joan paid back every penny they had so foolishly "borrowed" from God. Then they knelt together to claim His promise in Malachi 3:10, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, . . . and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

And true to His promise, God began to reward their obedience with rich blessings. When John was handed his next pay check he had to look at it a second time. Was it enough to cover all their needs? It certainly was, for it contained, not twice the usual amount, but three times what he had been receiving! The Lord had tripled his income!

God had also strengthened their faith in claiming other Bible promises, and helped them to get better acquainted with Him who is the "Giver of all our blessings."



## Chapter 10

### YOUTH LEADS THE WAY



JOHN ASH and his daughter, Helen, were having problems. At first they were small differences; then they grew larger. Communication deteriorated until there was open hostility. Finally, Helen could not stand it any longer and moved to an apartment a few blocks away.

Helen and her parents attended the same church and consequently met at Sabbath School and the worship service, M. V. services and the like. But the estrangement continued.

John Ash was a painting contractor. His business was going from bad to worse and his wife was becoming increasingly worried over their financial embarrassment. Bills were not being paid, and she knew this could not go on for long.

About this time John heard about the prayer classes being conducted in a nearby town. On several occasions he heard about people who had had unusual answers to prayer as the result of the class. His curiosity was aroused to the place that he made the

one hundred-mile round trip to investigate for himself, in the hope that it might be the answer to his problem.

As John sat and listened to thrilling testimonies of answered prayer, he became aware of one fact: "To every promise there are conditions" (Education, page 258). But it was very clearly emphasized that, "The conditions met, the promise is unequivocal!" (Ibid.)

John Ash was not unlike many others who attended the classes on prayer. That is, he was unhappy with himself, because, although he was happy that he was learning how to pray, it meant that he was going to have to meet the conditions if he expected to get an answer. One of the conditions presented was found in Matthew 5:23-25 that says if there is trouble or a misunderstanding with someone, it is our duty to go and make it right and then come and make our request.

John kept coming to the class each week. He was always thrilled to hear the youth and older people tell of answered prayers. As yet he had not felt he could conscientiously make the request of God he knew he had to because the conditions had not been met. It was a frustrating situation.

During this time, his business continued to deteriorate. It looked as if he was going to have to declare bankruptcy. If he did, it would mean losing much of his furniture he had recently purchased on the time-payment-plan. In his desperation he was ready to blame the class for some of his plight. He felt that perhaps the instruction was misleading. John was grasping for some excuse, something to blame for his situation.

He realized that none of his prayers were being answered. Every day he could see himself sinking deeper and deeper into debt.

As John thought about his problems, the

Holy Spirit impressed him with the stark truth that he had not obeyed the simple command to make wrongs right before expecting God to answer his prayers.

It was time for some action. John decided to write to several people with whom he had had problems and quarrels which had left bitter feelings. He decided he would apologize for his part of the problem and ask for forgiveness.

After starting to write, John realized that it would take days for the letters to reach their destination and for a reply to return. In a moment John knew what he would do—he would 'phone them.

Before he made the first call, John fell on his knees and surrendered his heart to the Lord as best he knew how. Then he called the three people involved in the problem. To each he apologized and received their forgiveness. John began feeling the thrill of forgiveness. It was great! But just as he was enjoying the exhilaration of forgiveness, he remembered there was one more call he must make,—he and Helen were still not speaking to each other.

He decided he would take care of that problem a little later in the week. There were other problems that demanded his immediate attention.

John had been troubled for some time about being a card-carrying Union member. Since he was making things right, he thought he ought to clear the slate. With that, he picked up the telephone and notified the Union that he was pulling out of the organization. Several other minor matters were adjusted, and John realized that very little remained left to do before he had met the conditions to answered prayer.

Now that he was no longer a Union member, he could not rely on them for work leads.

So he went to the printer and had a "flyer" printed up that advertized the fact that he was an experienced painter and was anxious to do good work at a fair price. The printing was promised for Friday afternoon, which meant that he could distribute the leaflets early Sunday morning. Things were beginning to look good again. John's faith was growing, inspite of the fact that there was no work in sight.

That Friday night he found himself sitting next to his daughter, Helen. He thought several times that he would make things right and ask her forgiveness for the way he had treated her. But each time he attempted to speak, he could not find the words. The program was about over and he still had not found the courage to settle the matter with his daughter.

After the program Helen was engaged in conversation with some of her friends. And before he knew it, she was gone.

John returned home with a heavy heart. He could not understand why it was he had not just taken the situation in hand and spoken to his daughter. It was going to be such a simple thing. Now it loomed before him as the one thing that prevented him from claiming the promises of the Bible. As he lay in bed, tossing and turning, not being able to go to sleep, it became an ever-increasing problem. It was growing bigger by the minute.

Suddenly, in the stillness of the night, he heard a rap on the front door. He wondered who could be calling at that hour of the night. He stumbled to the door and unlocked it. There, before his eyes stood his daughter.

"Oh, Helen," he said, "come on in. I was just thinking about you."

Helen had barely crossed the thresh-

old when she burst into tears and said, "Daddy, I couldn't stand it any longer. I've come to apologize to you for my bitter feelings I've held toward you for so long."

What a sight that was! Sitting there on the sofa, Helen and Daddy embraced, each forgiving the other and both so thankful for the effecting reconciliation. It was a wonderful experience that brought peace to both hearts.

Sabbath was a joyous day! How good it felt to be at peace with the world, thought John. The sun shone brighter, the birds sang sweeter, and everyone was so much friendlier it seemed as they enjoyed the day together.

Early Sunday morning John and his son distributed the leaflets that told of his desire for work. All day they worked passing out the news.

That night John prayed the prayer of reception and felt the assurance that God had heard his prayer. He went to sleep in complete confidence that the morrow would bring an answer—and work.

He did not have long to wait. The telephone rang early that morning, inviting him to come to work. By noon he was hard at work.

Just after he left for work, one of the finance companies called to say that they must have their money by that evening or they would have to come and pick up the refrigerator. Mrs. Ash did not want to, but finally decided she must take the word to her husband.

John had done sufficient work by that time to make it possible for him to ask the man for whom he was painting for an advance on the job. This request the employer gladly granted. Mrs. Ash went to the finance company and was able to make the payment just minutes before the office closed. It was

split-second timing, but God had answered their prayer in time.

By Wednesday of that week, John had received contracts to the tune of five thousand dollars, and was a very happy man!

A few days later, after prayer meeting, he related his experience to Hugh James; and then asked the question: "Why do you suppose God let me get so low before He answered me?"

Hugh James answered the question, after a moment's silence, with: "Do you suppose it is because we are stubborn, sometimes?"

John did not reply to this question, for he knew all too well how long it had taken him to make things right. He knew he had been very stubborn about his situation.

I wonder how much longer it would have been had not Helen responded to conviction and taken the first step toward reconciliation.

Once again, Youth Leads the Way! Thank God for dedicated youth!

The prayer class was a blessing to Ivan Rash too. He had become very discouraged. In fact his faith was at its lowest ebb—so low that he had been contemplating giving up his faith in God and leaving the church.

About this time, the Lord directed his steps to the prayer class. Word had gotten around about the marvelous answers to prayer that people were realizing and relating at the meetings. Ivan and his wife decided to attend a class meeting.

Ivan was there with his burden and problems; and his wife sat there listening to the answers to prayer, with a burden on her heart, too. She was concerned about her husband and his spiritual condition. She knew how Ivan would often become annoyed over some of the attitudes and actions of his employer,

who was also a member of the church. She had been praying for her husband for a long time before they had ever heard of the classes being taught on the Prayer of Reception.

In Psalms 119:165 God promises: "Great peace have they which love they law; and nothing shall offend them."

Ivan's wife prayed most earnestly that her husband might find this peace, and that, no matter what happened at work, he would not become offended.

At the third class meeting Ivan stood up to speak. His words were measured and full of meaning as he spoke of his discouragement. He felt ashamed to admit how far away from God discouragement had led him. Then he said, "Today my troubles are settled. When I approached the Lord this morning, I claimed the promises of His Word, and the Lord helped me to go to my boss today, and I've made things right with him." Then he told of his new relationship with Christ and his settled determination to stay close to the Lord in everything. "With God's help, I want to be faithful until Jesus comes," he concluded.

This was more than his wife expected. She could stay in her seat no longer, and so rose, and with tears in her eyes said: "I've been praying for my husband for a long time. God has heard my prayers and I'm deeply grateful."

There were problems that arose from time to time, but Ivan held fast (Hebrews 10:23), and God used him to be a blessing to others. His working partners recognized a change in him. His friends noticed the change in his attitude—toward life in general. It was so contagious that many of his friends came to him with their problems and sought his counsel.

At the next class meeting Ivan had a different kind of a problem. "What do I do

when my prayer list gets too long? Do I read each name separately and pray about each name individually? or do I ask God to do for these people what needs doing, as a whole? These people have come to me for help as the result of hearing about my experience."

He told about some of the people who had come to him for help. One was a high school senior who had been in trouble with the law several times. This boy's driver's license was about to be revoked, and his fines would amount to more than a week's wages. He had been a very belligerent young man, and had found himself in serious trouble on repeated occasions. Now, after having had a long talk together, this fine young man was dedicating his life to the Lord and was seriously thinking of preparing for the ministry.

Some of the class members responded to this by saying, "Wonderful!" "Praise the Lord!" Ivan finished his story with the words, "I was really impressed. It was all the Lord's doings and not mine."

There are some experiences related here which have taken place so recently that we can now report only a part of the answers.

The following experience is one of this type. It also has to do with our witness to Jesus Christ before others.

Every true child of God who obeys the unction of the Holy Spirit and finds sweet communion with Jesus is filled with the compelling desire to have his loved ones share in his wonderful discovery.

Wayne was one of these. He had been attending the classes on prayer and had come to know something of its power. He immediately began praying and working for his mother who had a very bad smoking problem.

In speaking to her about her problem, Wayne said, "Mom, are you willing to give it up?"

"No, Son," she said, "I've tried too many times. Three packs a day is an awful lot, but I guess there's nothing I can do about it now."

Wayne had learned some important things from the classes he had attended, and he knew that there was something that could be done. One of the things he had learned was that "God stands back of every promise He has made" ("Christ's Object Lessons," p. 147). He quickly sent up a silent prayer for wisdom (James 1:5), confident that it would be given.

"Mom, would you be willing to claim a promise about smoking?" Wayne asked.

"Claim a what?" his mother responded, a little puzzled.

"Claim a Bible promise, Mother". And then Wayne sat down and for nearly two hours patiently explained the wonderful method of ASKING, BELIEVING, and CLAIMING the promises of God's Word.

To his great delight, his mother agreed to try the program, including a ten-point program of thanksgiving which he told her about which involves finding and listing ten things each day for which we are thankful, which is a wonderful way to calm jittery nerves.

Wayne carefully wrote out what she must do on a slip of paper which she could have handy.

- A. Ask—Matthew 21:22.
- B. Believe—Matthew 21:22.
- C. Claim—and return thanks to God that you HAVE received the gift.  
I John 5:14,15; I Cor. 15:57.

He gave her also three promises to claim:

- I Corinthians 10:13—for smoking.
- II Corinthians 10:5—for her nerves.
- I John 5:16—for life.

Two weeks later Wayne's mother told him, "Son, I'll have to admit this program really does work. I'm already down to only one pack a day, and I'm feeling so much better."

This was happy news! But there was more wonderful news to come. When he invited her to hear a tape that he had recorded of one of my sermons, she said: "Elder Coon? Why, yes, I want to hear it. I heard him speak at the Inglewood Seventh-day Adventist church just yesterday."

Wayne had not known of her interest in the church nor of her attendance. His testimony at the next class was a complete confidence in the God of heaven that his mother would not only gain complete victory over the tobacco habit, but that she would soon be in regular attendance at the house of God. His heart was full of praise and thanksgiving.

God still lives! He is still answering the prayers of those who will fulfill the conditions. He is waiting to hear from you!

Why not take your problem to Him right now in prayer? He has answered others—He'll do the same for you.

## Chapter 11

### AFTER THIS, WHO COULD DOUBT?



ELL, THIS is it, for me," thought Helen when she heard the fateful words.

The kindly doctor reached over and patted her hand as she tried to control the growing fear that threatened to engulf her.

"I'm sorry," he said. "It seems you've had your share of trouble. But the X-rays are proof of what I've been suspecting for some time. You've had several surgeries, so you're acquainted with the medical term, sarcoma of the small bowel.

"I know what you're thinking, Helen. But let me encourage you to go to the Great Physician. Jesus can give you peace of mind and help you through this trying ordeal. And remember, I'll be praying for you."

During the long nights that followed, Helen lay awake for hours at a time. The tranquilizers, to which she had had to resort for several years, failed to give her the expected relief.

"What will happen to my children? Will

others be patient with my teenage sons who need their mother's love and understanding? What about the younger ones? They're growing out of babyhood, but to me they're still babies. Why, God why?' So ran her worried thoughts as this young mother faced a dark and dismal future.

In her heart Helen was not blaming God. She just could not understand why this doom was pronounced on her when her children needed her so much. Yet it did seem unjust and unfair. But since God holds the master plans and allows calamities and trials to guide each life in the right direction, Helen decided to accept His will.

Helen's home was not a happy one. The uncontrolled temper of a non-Christian husband kept things upset and tense most of the time. But in spite of her weakened condition, and constant pain, Helen attended church as often as she could.

The first Sabbath after her doctor's report, I had been invited to be the guest speaker at the church which she attended. Both Helen and I feel it was providential that she was there that Sabbath morning when I presented the A, B, C's of receptive prayer.

As she listened to one experience after another of how God was answering prayer for young people and older ones alike, Helen felt as if a whole new world was opening up before her. She felt that in the power of the prayer of reception lay the answer to her immediate problem. She had faith that God could, and would, answer her prayer if she surrendered herself completely and claimed His promise with unswerving faith.

Helen thought much about what she had heard, and then decided to step forward in faith. It was a very important decision she made. She phoned her pastor and a few friends whom she felt were sincere, consecrated Chris-



tians, and asked them all to pray at home. The ministers offered prayers of commitment as we do for the sick, since we cannot know whether the sick have fulfilled the conditions to healing.

Because "the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy" (James 5:11), and because He has promised in Psalms 50:15, "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me", God heard and answered the prayers presented to Him in faith and submission, in Helen's behalf.

When I talked with her later, she said, "I prayed at home, claiming I John 1:9. I wanted my heart to be right with God. I wanted nothing to stand between me and God to prevent His answering my prayer. As the Holy Spirit came into my heart, and His presence filled my body, I prayed, with tears streaming down my face, claiming Psalms 103:3-5: "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; . . . who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's."

Helen continued, "Oh, what wonderful blessings God is waiting to bestow upon us if we but ask! I had felt completely at loose ends, not knowing which way to turn. But after that prayer, an entirely new feeling entered my body. The terrible feeling of heaviness and discouragement lifted, and a peace like I'd never known before filled my soul. I fully trusted in God, believing all would be well."

On Helen's next visit to the doctor, a second set of X-rays was taken to verify the first. Several days of waiting followed, during which Helen prayed constantly for guidance.

Once more a diagnosis was made. Finally the day came for Helen to go back for the

doctor's report. As she entered his office, a smile spread over his face. Even before he spoke, Helen knew what the verdict was; her faith in answered prayer had never wavered since the day of special prayer.

"We see absolutely no further indication of the sarcoma we saw in the first X-rays," the doctor said.

Again, in her own words, I quote:

"The dreaded sarcoma was gone! God had performed a miracle for me! What a wonderful thing to have experienced! My heart is full of thanksgiving. I want to shout it from the housetops, as it were, and tell what God in His loving-kindness, has done for me. I try to share this experience with others whenever I can, that His name may be glorified."

Helen shared her healing experience with her neighbor lady next door. "This is the kind of prayer life I want," she said, "Would they allow me, too, to enroll in their prayer class?"

Helen has shared her experience with all who are interested, and God is using her to bring courage and help to many discouraged ones.

"Faith is the key," says Helen, "but we must sincerely believe."

There is no limit to our usefulness in the hands of God, or to His blessings upon us if we live humbly before Him.

One of the students in the prayer class was afflicted during the lesson study.

"Oh, if my back would only stop aching," thought Alma as she sat listening to other prayer students relate their experiences. The tired muscles in her back were really beginning to give her trouble. Realizing that she was sitting in a straight-back chair, and knowing from past experience that, after a



hard day at work something more serious might develop, Alma began to pray.

Immediately the promise found in Psalms 37:5 came into her mind, "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass."

The ache in her back became more intense. "Oh," she thought, "this pain is nearly killing me! How can I concentrate on this promise?"

But the Lord came to her rescue, and as she repeated the Bible promise over and over again in her mind, the troublesome pain began to lessen. This was something that had never happened before, and her heart was thrilled!

By the time the meeting was over, the pain was completely gone. Truly, "God does stand back of every promise that He has made." (See "Christ's Object Lessons," page 147.)

Whether it is for the conversion of a soul, or a broken heart, a barbituate addict, or an aching back, God is near and ready to hear.

Another example of answered prayer was that of Sonri. Although Sonri tried to conceal her emotions, she must have been the most unhappy person in the prayer class. Somehow, and for reasons unknown to her at the time, her thyroid gland had become infected. Not wishing to miss the prayer class, she decided to make the long drive with the others who also attended. She did not regret doing so.

No one can feel depressed in the midst of a happy group of Christians who are rejoicing and praising the Lord for answered prayer. Sonri was much encouraged, and when she joined her prayer band group, she told them of her problem. They immediately de-

cided to petition the Lord and ask for healing for Sonri, claiming the Bible promise: "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases." Psalms 103:3.

Wednesday evening was Sonri's appointment with her physician. As she talked with him, he explained how the disease affected the gland, sometimes destroying it. There was not really too much that he could do for her.

At the first opportunity given for relating her experience to the prayer class, Sonri had this to say:

"On Thursday I was feeling better, and by the following Monday the infection was completely gone. I feel God has definitely answered our prayers."

Everywhere we go we find fresh evidences of God's wonderful powers and willingness to answer prayer through Jesus our Lord. One very fine lady wrote after we had conducted a prayer series in her city:

"After fourteen years of praying, you have shown me how to claim victory through faith in God's promises. One night my husband took the car and went for a short drive for his smoke before going to bed. I knelt by the living room sofa and prayed, 'Dear God, You have promised that if we bring our tithes and offerings to You, that You would rebuke the devourer for our sakes. Lord, I claim that promise. I believe You will do it. I believe You will help my husband to stop smoking. Thank You, Lord.'"

"With that I went to bed. In a little while my husband came home. I expected him to announce as soon as he entered the door, that he had quit smoking and that he would never again touch a cigarette. But he didn't say a word when he came in.

"As I lay in bed, I thought, 'Lord, is it too soon?'"

"Two days later my husband came home from work. It was on a Friday. When he walked in he smiled real big and said, 'I haven't smoked all day. I'm through with them from here on out.'"

"Immediately I breathed a 'Thank You' prayer to the Lord for what He had done for my husband—victory through faith."

Then she went on to relate a second experience:

"One morning, after my husband had left for work, I was suddenly taken ill. I was all alone and I didn't know what to do. So I prayed, 'Dear God, please send me some help.' As I finished my prayer, I heard a knock at the door. I invited whoever was there to come in."

"When the lady entered, I realized I had never met her, but knew that she lived just across the street from me. 'Thank God you came,' I said, 'I am in need of help. I've just become very sick.'"

"In reply she said, 'I must tell you the experience I just had. I was getting ready to go to school (she was a high school teacher), and realized that I was already late, so I was just getting something hot to drink. As I raised my cup to drink, it seemed that a voice told me to come over here. This is the strangest experience I've ever had. I don't understand it. What can I do for you?'"

"I told her that I understood it perfectly. I told her how I had just prayed that God would send someone to help me. I told her that I knew it was a direct answer to the prayer of faith."

"Of course my neighbor lady gave me the help I needed, and I soon was feeling better. This is only one of many blessings that God

has bestowed upon me in answer to the prayer of reception."

Is God interested, even in our adopting children? Listen to this.

"My husband and I were worried. It had been two years since we had adopted little Kimber and still she wasn't our own," said Minnie Porter, a member of the prayer class.

"Kimber was four months old when we first got her. Our attorney was having difficulty locating the real mother, in order to obtain her signature on the adoption papers. A whole year went by before it was secured."

"Then it seems, no matter what we did, or how many times we contacted him, the attorney kept putting off the signing of the final adoption papers. We had tried everything humanly possible to bring about the signature, but for another whole year we were being put off. This procedure should have taken a maximum of six weeks after the signing of the adoption papers. We were still waiting after two years!"

"I was getting desperate," Minnie continued. "Suppose Kimber's father should come and try to claim the baby. I couldn't give Kimber up now. She was the light of my life. If only there was something I could do to force the attorney to act."

"About this time, Elder Coon conducted a series of meetings on prayer in our church. I was thrilled when I heard the first study. I wanted to learn more, but found that the class being taught on The Prayer of Reception was restricted to the young people. My husband suggested that we begin claiming promises by ourselves, but I simply told him that I didn't know enough about it to do it intelligently."

"Then we heard of another class that was

being opened in La Sierra. This one was open to all age groups, so my husband and I both signed up immediately. There we learned HOW to claim promises and pray the prayer of reception.

"In the morning we had our morning devotion and I was claiming the promise for 'life' for the party chosen by our prayer band. While in prayer, the thought came to me, 'Why not claim a promise for our little Kimber? God knows how much we love her and want to keep her.' So I started searching my Bible for a promise that I could claim.

"My eyes fell on the text in Psalms 37: 5, 'Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.' I placed my finger upon this text and prayed, 'Dear Lord, Thou knowest that I have fulfilled the conditions laid down in this promise. I have committed my way unto Thee, and I do trust in Thee. Now I ask Thee to bring it to pass as Thou hast promised. Provide a way so that the final adoption papers may be signed and our little Kimber will be truly ours. I believe that You are providing a way, and I thank Thee for it, in Jesus' name, Amen.'

"I wasn't off my knees for five minutes when the phone rang. It was the attorney saying, 'Come in and sign the final papers, and I will arrange for your hearing before the judge.'

"It was hard to believe. I had waited so long. But God was ready to fulfill my prayer in a matter of minutes. Kimber is ours now, and I could not be happier."

Our God is able! He is ready and willing to take care of small problems as well as the large ones. It is we who prevent His doing all He is willing to do.

Let us reach out by faith for all He is offering us.

## Chapter 12

### MARGARET PERSEVERED



ONE OF OUR very precious friends is Margaret Edge. Margaret Edge and Dorothy Robison are due a debt of gratitude for their faithful and loving assistance in doing "Youth Prays." Let us share first a Scripture and then an experience Margaret thrillingly relates.

"For he is faithful that promised . . ." Hebrews 10:23.

Margaret was bubbling over with enthusiasm and joy as she told me of how the Lord had answered her prayer of reception and commitment. I did not even try to get a word in edge-wise. I just listened and thrilled with her as she told me of God's goodness.

I'll just let her tell you that same story:

"It was Friday afternoon. While my day-care children were napping, I was hurriedly trying to catch up with the many and sundry duties that are so necessary in a busy household.

"Then the telephone rang, and all plans

and ambitions to have the house and hearts in readiness for the Sabbath were suddenly taken away. The long-distance call, relayed to us through a relative, was to prepare us for the inevitable.

"Our niece's precious baby was seriously ill with a puzzling ailment. He had gradually been losing weight, was now down to fifteen pounds, and the doctors on the case had decided to operate. It was very discouraging, especially to the young mother, for Kevin was an only child and not quite one year old.

"It was very upsetting. My first impulse was to send a prayer heaven-ward; the second, to call a special friend, one whom I knew was in close touch with God at all times. She and her minister husband promised to have special prayer for little Kevin, and my sad heart was somewhat comforted. We had also been praying for the baby's mother who had left the church and had married out of the faith.

"This must be one of the means that will bring her back,' I thought as I continued my preparations for the Sabbath. The Lord has promised that, 'All things work together for good' (Romans 8:28). I kept thinking; and He is 'not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance' (II Peter 3:9).

"Neither of these Bible verses contained a definite promise for healing, so I saw I could only pray the prayer of commitment, 'Thy will be done' (Matthew 26:42), and 'Not as I will, but as Thou wilt' (Matthew 26:39).

"Thus I reasoned and prayed during the remaining hours of the day: and thus I kept close to Jesus.

"In due time, the parents came for the day-care children. The holy Sabbath hours were drawing near as I sat down on the big, screened porch to watch the glowing colors

in the western sky. I picked up some copies of the "Youth's Instructor" and glanced through the pages. My eyes fell upon the story of a young mother whose child was also sick. She claimed the promise in Psalms 46:1: 'God is my refuge and strength . . .' as she hurried to the side of her child. This text greatly cheered my heart.

"As the comforting darkness of Sabbath evening enveloped the house, I made my way to the bedroom and gave in to the flood of tears that just could not be held back any longer. This brought relief to tired nerves, and I could listen better to the still, small voice of God.

"God is my refuge and strength,' I repeated, 'a very present help in trouble.' Then I asked that my niece, Kevin's mother, whom I have always called 'my little girl,' would accept God as her strength in this great trouble.

"And so I prayed and wept for both of them. Then the Lord gave me a mental picture of two of my little day charges, leaping for joy (Luke 6:23), and saying in their childish voices, 'pwaise da Ward! Pwaise da Ward!' This came as a direct message to my heart, 'It's time to praise the Lord.'

"I sat up, snapped on the light, and reached out to pick up my Bible. I wondered what promise I might claim for myself. But 'before they call, I will answer' (Isaiah 65:24) the Lord has promised, and His answer was right there beside me.

"The Bible was open to Jeremiah 31. In amazement I carefully picked it up. What a feeling of joy swept over me as my eyes were drawn to the words in the 16th verse, the only one on the two pages that was underlined and marked:

"Thus saith the Lord; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears; for

thy work shall be rewarded, saith the LORD; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy.'

"Now my heart could sing, and my lips could praise the Lord. Instinctively I began singing aloud a simple little melody which I've always believed God helped me compose:

"I praise the Lord in the morning,  
When the birds their carols sing;  
My heart is glad, I can't be sad,  
The air with joy does ring.

"I praise the Lord in the morning,  
And angels join the song;  
We praise the name of Jesus,  
We all to Him belong.

"During the following week an exchange of phone calls verified the fact that 'God stands back of every promise He has made.'"  
--Christ's Object Lessons, p. 147.

"Our 'prayer baby' was literally brought back from the land of the enemy. The doctors had postponed the exploratory surgery, and since the baby had gained back a pound, they allowed him to go home.

"Although I continued to pray for little Kevin and his mother, the cares of this life gradually crowded in and I failed to persevere in prayer. Some days were more pressing than others, but I managed to send a soft, cuddly toy to Kevin for his first birthday, so thankful that he was still with us.

"Before he received it, the 'enemy' struck again, and God allowed my faith to be tried severely. I forgot for the moment that the Lord promises in James 1:3, 'The trying of your faith worketh patience.'

"When the telephone rang at midnight, I was not prepared for the stunning message that I received. Kevin's mother anxiously told me that the baby was in the hospital

again, this time with what the doctors thought was pneumonia. She said they would not let even her see him. I tried to comfort her by telling her that I would be praying for him, and that I loved her dearly.

"When I put down the receiver and slowly made my way back to bed, I was sick at heart. Was this God's way of saving 'my little girl' and bringing them back from the 'land of the enemy?' What about the promise that just a few days ago had seemed so definite: 'Thus saith the Lord; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy' (Jeremiah 31:16). I began to ask myself where my faith and confidence had gone. It had been so strong just a few days before. Now I was back down in the doldrums of despair again.

"The answer came after I went to the Lord in prayer: 'Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord' (Isaiah 1:18). The Lord is not slack concerning his promise (II Peter 3:9). 'Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward, . . . that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise (Hebrews 10:23). Hold fast the profession of 'your' faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)' (Hebrews 10:23).

"Then again I turned to Jeremiah 31:16, and with confidence and assurance in my heart thanked God for His promises, and for bringing Kevin back from the 'land of the enemy' once more.

"I continued to pray this way--'without ceasing' (I Thessalonians 5:17).

"Because no more telephone messages were received, I took the silence to mean that all was well. I continued to thank the Lord for making Kevin well again, and for all that his

health would mean in the salvation of both mother and baby. One day as I was having my private devotions, I read something that I thought was so good. It was in the book, "Early Writings", page 73:

"We should be much in secret prayer. . . I asked the angel why there was no more faith and power in Israel. He said, 'Ye let go of the arm of the Lord too soon. Press your petitions to the throne, and hold on by strong faith. The promises are sure. Believe ye receive the things ye ask for, and ye shall have them.'

"I was rewarded for my faith, for in just a few weeks I received another phone call. This time my niece was calm and happy. The doctors had found the cause of the illness and had been able to successfully treat the baby. The baby is learning to walk and looks like a butter-ball, according to the last report I received.

"How good God is. He may test us and try our faith, but if we will but persevere, the reward for our faithfulness will be sure.

"I thank God for all He has done, and for all He is going to do in the days to come."

In all our prayer classes we make clear that the prayer for the sick is to be one of commitment. We also have made it a practice to hand each student several type-written pages explaining why prayer for the sick must be one of commitment. This is why Margaret, in relating her experience in praying for Kevin, stated that it was one of commitment as well as reception—commitment for the physical healing, and reception for the spiritual life of both her niece and Kevin. And how wonderful is our Father in heaven! He gave her a wonderful answer to the prayer

of commitment; and some day, if she persists, we doubt not but what the prayer for her loved ones will result in their being among the saved.

## Chapter 13

### ALL SUFFICIENT



MARGARET picked up the lesson assignment and read the first part: "Bring in five Bible promises that deal with everyday life." Then she closed her eyes and claimed the promise for wisdom found in James 1:5.

Since attending a few of the classes on prayer, Margaret was getting better acquainted with her Saviour, and it gave her quite a thrill whenever He sent a definite answer to a simple little prayer of reception.

"Everyday life?" She thought about it for a moment. "That's quite an assignment. I wonder how much time it will take," she thought. "When my day begins, it really starts off with a bang, and I certainly need to keep going to stay ahead of a houseful of lively youngsters."

Margaret operated a day-nursery and her days were filled with a variety of problems. She never knew from one day to the next how many children would be present. She looked at the clock. "Two hours before they start arriving. Let me see, how

shall I do this? I know," she mused, "I'll write down everything we usually do each day and see how many promises I have need of. Thank You, Lord, for this idea."

Margaret was soon in a writing mood, and ideas came thick and fast. Realizing that with an increasing number of children coming, she would need an increasing number of promises, she recalled a typical busy day.

"I usually waken quite early," she wrote, "so I have time to study my Sabbath School lesson, read and pray for my family and friends. Then I begin to think about the little ones who will be with me all day, and pray for each of them."

"Now, what promise can I claim that will help me today? What do I need most? Patience! That's it—and plenty of it, what with five boys and two girls in constant motion!

"What does 'patience' mean? It means being calm, quiet, uncomplaining. Uncomplaining? Calm? When seven children seem to be talking at once, trying to show me a new dolly, a book, or handing me a bottle or a note . . . not to mention the ringing telephone, or having to rescue the puppy and settle an argument about whose turn it is to hold him. Yes, I need patience! The Lord says so, too.

"Promise No. 1: In Hebrews 10:36, God says: 'Ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.' I'll need that patience in just a few minutes. The school bus will be here any minute. Then I'll pass out crayons or magazines and books. I'll have to see to it that they are all entertained and busy before I hurry Walter across the street. Yes, I'll certainly need patience!

"Then it's prayer time with the children. Some insist that they have just had



prayer at home. I can insist that we pray again, or I can find another way.

"Now what promise do I need? I John 1:9, of course, '... he is faithful and just to forgive us ...' even when we've been a little hasty with our tongues. I raised my voice before I left the house. I wanted to make sure that the children knew I meant what I said. I run outside, feel the crisp air, wave to the friendly bus driver, kiss my boy good-bye, and thank the Lord for His many blessings to this point.

"I get back into the house, having claimed the promise of I John 1:9 and am ready for the next hurdle. (I like to call it 'hurdle' because the Lord says, 'leap for joy' when you're in trouble. And leaping is a good way to get over a hurdle, isn't it?)

"Promise No. 2: This is found in Isaiah 30:15, 'In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.' From Isaiah 40:31, I learn how to be quiet and have confidence: 'They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.'

"Promise No. 3: James 1:5-8, 'If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God; ... and it shall be given him.' This one I use most of all.

"Now the sun is up a little higher and it looks a little warmer outside. If one child decides to go outside, it's amazing how all of the other little cherubs decide they want to go out too. Everyone is shouting a request, 'Can I go too? Can I go too?'

"All right, what do I do now? Where is the wisdom I've just thanked God for? I tell myself not to waver because I know that I won't receive anything of the Lord if I waver. I must keep calm now and use the wisdom God

has given me. God has promised to show me a 'more excellent way' (I Corinthians 12:3).

"The easiest way would be for me to say, 'Fine, all of you get your jackets on and go out and play. I've got work to do.'

"But I don't do that because it is not the 'more excellent way'. In this case, and at the present moment the 'more excellent way' is found in Deuteronomy 6:6,7, 'Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children.' Psalms 127:3 tells us that 'Children are an heritage of the Lord.' Since the younger members of the Lord's family need to be taught, the Lord's wisdom for me is to teach. Teach what? How? Right now? Right now, before the leader of this little flock turns into the Lone Ranger or Bat Man—or something worse!

"Promise No. 4: This one comes to mind easily and quickly. It is found in Isaiah 41:10: 'Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee.' And I say, 'Thank You, Lord. Thank You.'

"Immediately I raise my hand for attention. When they are all waiting for an answer, I drop my voice and say very quietly, 'Whose turn is it to help me today?' Of course I don't expect them all to change into perfect little helpers instantly, but one or two of them shout, 'I will!' 'I will!' 'My turn!' The mob has been dispersed, new partnerships have been formed, and again I say, 'Thank You, Lord. Thank You.'

"And so it goes throughout the day. Each child is different, reacts differently, and so God gives the wisdom to fit the need. Sometimes we stop in the middle of a very important job to read a story, have prayer with a naughty little lamb, or get out the memory verse booklets and repeat some Bible verses.

the book that is required in the prayer class. I don't believe I am asking 'amiss' (James 4:3), or that it is a selfish asking; so please, Lord provide the time so I can read. Thank You, Lord. Amen."

Then she went about her usual household tasks.

When it was time for the baby's morning nap, an unusual thing happened. Nine-month-old Susan just could not go to sleep. If she could talk, she might have insisted on playing with Betty. But since that was not possible, she let mother know in other ways that a nap was not to her liking.

"Well, if you won't, you won't" said mother, who had many things to do and was hurrying through her work thinking the Lord would work something out so she could study for the class. Her mind was also on the book for required reading that she had gotten at the class.

After lunch, Baby Susan decided that a good long sleep would be just fine. Mother whole-heartedly agreed, and soon tucked her sleepy daughter into bed.

"You darling," whispered mother. "Why can't your big sister go to sleep as quickly and as easily as you?" And then the thought struck her, perhaps this was the way the Lord had decided to answer her prayer.

Quietly closing the bedroom door, she went in search of Betty. She still did not want to take a nap and tried to persuade Mother that it was not really necessary.

But Mother was determined to help the Lord answer her prayer. The promise found in Matthew 7:7 came to her mind, "Ask, and it shall be given . . ."

"Dear Lord," Mother prayed, "I believe You are answering my prayer for a quiet time to read the book. Please help Betty to lie down and relax now while the baby is asleep.

You have promised that if I ask for anything, You will give it to me. So I am asking You to let her go to sleep. I believe that she is going to go to sleep now; and I thank You for doing it. Amen."

While Mother was silently talking to the One Who says, "Suffer little children to come unto me" (Mark 10:14), she was gently rubbing Betty's back and showing her love and attention. Then she began humming softly a familiar tune.

Under the subduing influence, the presence of Jesus was felt in the room, and immediately two-year-old Betty, who, up to this time had never gone to sleep within the hour, closed her eyes and was fast asleep.

With a heart full of thankfulness, Mother whispered, "Thank You, dear Lord," and hurried toward her book and a comfortable chair.

Pearl James was frantic, and time was slipping away. Where in the world had she put those stamps? In the desk drawer? She looked again, without success. In the kitchen by the telephone? No, not there.

"Where, oh, where are they?" she whispered aloud. "They should be here somewhere. Things just don't disappear into thin air! Maybe . . ." she glanced at the clock. "No, I'd never make it to the post-office now. It's already closing time. But this letter must be in the mail tonight! I just have to find those stamps!"

Is this the way it is at your house occasionally? You may not be looking for postage stamps; it could be your Sabbath school lesson quarterly, or any one of a number of items.

The Lord says, "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee . . ." (Psalms 50:15).

After looking in every likely place again Pearl decided to claim a Bible promise. "If it can work for others, the Lord can make it work for me," she said aloud as she walked over to the sofa where she planned to speak to the Lord.

At the next meeting of the prayer class, the members rejoiced with Pearl as she reported:

"I claimed the promise, 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find,' (Matthew 7:7). Then I opened one of the drawers and lifted some papers, and out dropped the stamps!"

He Who watches the tiny sparrow is interested in every detail of our lives.

According to "The Great Controversy", page 622: "We should now acquaint ourselves with God by proving His promises."

Are you?

## Chapter 14

### WORRIED ABOUT CONDITIONS?



IRIAM BROWN was a young, vivacious college sophomore who had recently learned of the Seventh-day Adventist faith and whole-heartedly accepted it. She was enrolled in the class on the Prayer of Reception, and it was my privilege to interview her one day.

We discussed the conditions to answered prayer. I wanted to know her attitude toward this matter of conditions to answered prayer. Some of them are:

1. To feel our need. Isaiah 44:3.
2. Faith. Hebrews 11:6.
3. Harbor no cherished sin. Psalms 66:18.
4. Obedience. Prov. 28:9.
5. Unselfish purpose. Luke 11:1-13.
6. Persistence. Luke 18:7.
7. Diligence. Luke 15:8.
8. Through Christ. John 16:23.
9. A forgiving spirit. Mark 11:25, 26; Luke 6:37.
10. An uncondemning spirit. Isaiah 58:9-12; Luke 6:37.

11. Family harmony. I Peter 3:6-11.

12. Humility. Psalms 25:9.

In reply to my question, Miriam said, "In the church of which I was a member before I learned of the Seventh-day Adventist faith, nothing was said about conditions. In fact, very little was said about prayer."

Then smiled as she said, "I'm so happy to learn about the conditions to answered prayer; for I feel now that I have a real assurance in prayer. I know now that as surely as I fulfill the conditions, God will fulfill His promise. It is most encouraging to me as I pray."

Then she went on to say that there are times when there is a struggle to surrender, to be willing to meet the conditions to answered prayer. "But," she said, "I know it is useless for me to pray unless I am also willing to fulfill the simple conditions."

Another student to whom I spoke about this same matter shared with me his reaction. "To me, meeting the conditions to answered prayer is a way of life," he said. "The conditions to answered prayer merely outline what a normal, healthy Christian life is like. If we are living the right kind of life in Christ, then we are also fulfilling the conditions to answered prayer." To him it was just that simple.

To illustrate further: One of the conditions to answered prayer is to have a forgiving spirit. This forgiving spirit should not be turned on only when we want an answer to a prayer. It can be, and should be, a way of life. In the same way the Bible tells us, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Psalms 66:18). If Jesus lives in our hearts, we will, as a normal and constant way of life, be devoid of harboring iniquity.

What is true of these two conditions is

true of all the conditions to answered prayer. God does not ask the impossible, nor does He make it difficult for us to approach Him in prayer.

We have discovered in our ministry that even the most dedicated men have problems with which they must battle. Someone has done them a grave injustice, and they feel it keenly—sometimes to the point of retaliation. Bitterness seems to have taken a hold of their feelings and they begin to turn sour in their entire attitude. This condition can creep up on us almost imperceptibly, even as we carry heavy burdens for God.

When someone maligns our purest motives, misjudges our most sincere efforts, and misrepresents our unselfish actions, human nature is going to feel it. To say we are not hurt is to ignore that we are human.

The James Whites had such an experience, and of this Ellen White wrote:

"Our property may go, and we will still rejoice in God, if it be used for the advancement of his cause. We have cheerfully spent the best of our days, the best of our strength, and have nearly worn out in the same cause, and feel the infirmities of premature age, and yet we will rejoice. But when our professed brethren attack our character and influence, by representing us as wealthy, worldly, and grasping for more, it is then that we feel keenly. Let us enjoy the character and influence we have dearly earned during the past twenty years, with even poverty and a slight hold on health and this mortal life, and we will rejoice, and cheerfully give to the cause the little there is left of us."

—Testimonies, Vol. 1, pp. 607, 608.

This illustrates the effect injustices can have on the best of saints. These injustices are felt keenly by most everyone wrong-

ed this way. But there is a difference between being hurt and being bitter; between being wronged and being retaliatory. The Whites felt the hurt keenly, but they did not permit themselves to dwell in bitterness, brooding over these injustices. They recognized the hurt for what it was, but when they had aired their feelings, they went on in courage and faith, determined to be servants of the God of heaven.

Paul suggests that we "examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith" (II Corinthians 13:5), from time to time. This can be a painful process, but when we have gone through the experience, we realize that unless we have a companionship with Jesus, of ourselves we are most incapable of living a successful Christian life.

When we realize our need for the power of heaven to transform these hearts of ours, we live in the attitude of surrender and gratitude for what He has done for us. We begin to step out in faith and ask for still greater things from a God Who is willing to give us good things.

Some years ago I was thrilled to learn that every Bible promise is for me, personally. I learned it from studying the book "Ministry of Healing". On page 122 I read these words: "So with all the promises of God's word. In them He is speaking to us individually, speaking as directly as if we could listen to His voice."

Then on page 59 of the book, "Christ's Object Lessons", I noted these words: "Only he who receives the Scriptures as the voice of God speaking to himself, is a true learner."

Since I, a minister of God and His Holy Word, considered myself a true learner, I also accepted the fact that I must receive

the Scriptures as God's voice speaking to me personally.

"What a thrill to know this," I thought. "And what a feeling of joyous anticipation it is to study and read my Lord's messages to me personally!"

Then I read, "To every promise of God there are conditions."--Education, p. 253.

"There are certain conditions upon which we may expect that God will hear and answer our prayers."--Steps to Christ, p. 95 (Army-Navy edition).

After studying these conditions, I made another discovery. My own efforts to fulfill the conditions were not enough. Without God's help, it was impossible. So I began to pray earnestly, as I studied, to know just how to comply with these divine requirements.

Then I received an understanding of the whole problem, that brought peace and joy to my soul. I realized that long before I was born, God had already prepared all the help I needed to do this.

As I share this knowledge with the young people in the prayer classes, it proves to be a blessing to them as it was to me, and as it continues to thrill my heart. I share it something like this:

First—God gave me a Saviour in His Son, Jesus. John 3:16.

Second—God gave me the Bible. II Peter 1:4. (It contains 3,573 promises.)

Third—God gave me faith to accept Jesus as my personal Saviour. Romans 12:3 (last part).

Fourth—God gives me repentance and forgiveness. Acts 5:31; I John 1:9.

Fifth—God gives me a new heart and a new spirit. Ezekiel 36:26,27.

Sixth—God gives me love for others. Romans 5:5; Galatians 5:22.

Seventh—I must obey to receive answers  
to prayer, and God gives me the  
gift of obedience. Ezekiel 36:27.

Because God's love for us is so very  
great, and because He knows our great need  
for His saving grace in our lives, He gives  
us "exceeding great and precious promises"  
(II Peter 1:4), and all the help we need to  
fulfill the conditions to them.

What less can we do than to Ask, Believe,  
Claim and return thanks to our wonderful hea-  
venly Father that He has fulfilled His prom-  
ises to us?

Every condition to prayer is itself a  
free gift promised by our Lord. So, let us  
ask Him to fulfill in us the very condition  
needed to receive still other gifts promised,  
and then use them all to be a blessing to  
others.

When I first realized that conditions to  
answered prayer are themselves gifts from God,  
I sat down and penned these verses which, I  
think, say what I feel:

#### CONDITIONS

Do God's conditions  
To answered prayer  
Cause consternation,  
And deep despair?

Look twice; you shall see  
The conditions, too,  
Are gifts from His hand  
He has promised you.

For each condition  
Is a treasure chest,  
Which is, with its gift,  
A blessing, and blest.

The two are twin gifts,  
Each a precious one;

And God's choicest gifts  
Are found in His Son.

But let us not pray amiss. For example,  
there is the experience of Wayne and Pat.  
They had been asking themselves:

"Why hasn't God answered our prayer? He  
knows how much we want to rent that house in  
Santa Ana Canyon. It's just what we need,  
with lots of room and different kinds of  
fruit trees. We've been claiming Bible prom-  
ises. God tells us in Philippians 4:19 that  
He will supply all our needs. And in John  
16:23 we have the promise that 'Whatsoever ye  
shall ask the Father in my name, he will give  
it you.' We've certainly been asking. So  
why doesn't God answer our prayer?" These  
were the questions that Wayne and Pat Ward  
were asking themselves.

"Wayne," Pat answered thoughtfully, "do  
you suppose we could be praying amiss? May-  
be our prayers are becoming ritualistic.  
Let's claim the promise in James 1:5 for  
wisdom so we can pray aright."

"All right," said Wayne. And this they  
did, seeking God in all earnestness for wis-  
dom.

Not long after this conversation the two  
of them drove to La Sierra to obtain some  
application blanks for the prayer class. But  
the folk they came to see were not at home,  
so they chatted briefly with my wife.

Just as they were preparing to leave, I  
opened the door and walked in. You should  
have seen the smiles on the faces of those  
two young people!

"Elder Coon!" Wayne exclaimed. "You're  
the answer to our prayer. The Lord sent you  
home so you could help us."

Then they went on to explain their prob-  
lem. "It's about a particular house in the

Santa Ana Canyon. Although we've been claiming Bible promises, the Lord has not answered our prayer. Why, I don't know. He has answered all the other prayers we have claimed promises for. We've fulfilled all the conditions. We have even been double tithing. So why hasn't God answered this prayer?"

Before giving any counsel, I always pray for divine guidance. So after a few minutes of quiet meditation, I said, "Wayne, God has promised that if we ask, He will give. Perhaps we need a coat, but can we tell God that we need a certain, particular red coat?"

"Or perhaps we need a car. Should we say, 'God, I want You to give me the latest Cadillac'? God knows you need a bigger house. He also knows you would like to be out there near your wife's relatives so she won't be lonely. But do you have a right to tell God that you must have that one particular house?"

I could see from their facial expressions that both were following my reasoning, so I continued.

"God has told us in Jeremiah 33:3: 'Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.'

"Now maybe this is not the house God sees is best for you to have. Maybe He has a better one for you. You can pray the prayer of reception for a house, but you must pray the prayer of commitment for a particular house. Then, you may reason with the Lord as He has told you to in Isaiah 1:18."

As Wayne shook my hand he said, "Thank you, Elder Coon! Thank you. Do you know, your counsel has been a direct answer to our prayer for wisdom? The Lord be praised!"

Wayne and his wife could hardly wait until they arrived home so they could pray the prayer of reception for a house, and

then pray the prayer of commitment for this particular house.

When they arrived home, they knelt in prayer. Before they rose from their knees, Wayne added, "Lord, please give us this particular house only if it will be to Thine honor and glory. Amen."

And Pat prayed, "Dear Lord, if it could be possible, could we get it for one hundred dollars a month? You know that is all we can afford."

Our conversation with Wayne and Pat was on a Sunday evening. The very next day they received a phone call concerning the house. They could have it, and for one hundred dollars a month!

Wayne and Pat are convinced this was a direct answer to their prayer of commitment from a loving heavenly Father.



## Chapter 15

### THAT GUARDIAN ANGEL



HE TELEPHONE rang. It was Margaret calling.

"Dorothy? Would you like to go with us to Norwalk to hear Elder Coon tonight. Mrs. Heintz plans to go and she says that there is room in the car for two or three more. How about it?"

Without a moment's hesitation, Dorothy answered, "Oh, yes, I'd love to go! Where shall I meet you, and what time? At 6:30? Don't you think we should leave earlier? That freeway traffic can get awfully congested, you know, and we don't want to miss any of Elder Coon's message. All right I'll be ready. Thank you! Thank you for calling and inviting me. 'Bye now. I'll see you tonight."

And so began a chain of circumstances that changed the concept of prayer in the lives of several of our friends. The author was teaching the A, B, C's of Bible prayer.

"In the prayer of faith there is a divine science; it is a science that everyone who would make his lifework a success must understand" (Education, p. 257).

The speaker pointed out that just prior to the coming of Jesus, "we shall need an experience which we do not now possess" (The Great Controversy, p. 622).

These special studies that were being conducted in the Norwalk, California church were an attempt to share with the people the "how" of getting this experience. The attentive listeners were reminded, "We should now acquaint ourselves with God by proving His promises" (Ibid).

"In the word of God there are gracious promises, from which those who are suffering . . . may receive comfort and hope and encouragement" (Counsels on Health, p. 213).

Margaret and Dorothy were thrilled to learn the basic fundamentals—the "know-how"—of proving God's promises.

Just as they had to know the A, B, C's of learning before the knowledge of reading came to them, so the A, B, C's of prayer had to be mastered before they actually became acquainted with God. This amazing subject came from a Book they thought they knew pretty well.

ASK, Jesus bids us in Matthew 21:22.

BELIEVE, that you receive, Matthew 21:22.

CLAIM, by RETURNING thanks that we have received, John 11:41.

The speaker recommended that all who could obtain the book "Education", by E. G. White, should read and study the chapter entitled, "Faith and Prayer". He called it "the million dollar chapter."

Margaret and Dorothy wholeheartedly agreed when they read on page 258: "He (Christ) makes it plain that our asking must be according to God's will; we must ask for the things that He has promised, and whatever we receive must be used in doing His will. The conditions met, the promise is unequivocal. . . . For any gift He has promised,

we may ask; then we are to believe that we receive, and return thanks to God that we have received."

As the group of ladies continued to travel the eighty-odd miles from their homes to the series of meetings and back, many different opinions and experiences were recounted. They were thrilled with the knowledge and understanding they were receiving from these meetings. Their faith and confidence in Jesus seemed to be growing by leaps and bounds.

Then one Sunday Dorothy's telephone rang again. "Dorothy," Margaret said, "Pat and her husband want to go to the meeting tonight, and since Mrs. Heintz already has a carload, I'm planning to take my car. Would you like to ride with us?"

"Yes, surely," Dorothy answered, "I'll be glad to. Arrangements were made as to the time and place of meeting.

That evening, with Pat and Harvey aboard, Margaret started in the direction of Dorothy's home. As the car's engine began to warm up, a faint odor of gasoline could be smelled.

For several minutes nothing was said. Finally Margaret became worried. "I don't like this gasoline smell at all," she commented. Silently, a special petition was sent up to the One Who promises to give wisdom and protection.

When they came to a service station, Margaret decided to have the motor checked for possible gasoline line leaks. She knew from past experience that it is not a wise thing to lean on your "own understanding" (Proverbs 3:5). If help is available, the smart thing to do is to get it!

While the tank was being filled, a young man checked under the hood.

"He's almost too young to know what he's doing," Margaret was thinking. She turned to Harvey. "Would you mind checking to see what's

wrong? And please tell the man to hurry. We'll be late unless we can get back on the road shortly."

When Harvey returned to the car, he said, "The gas line has a leak, but the man tightened it. I'm sure it will be all right now."

Again a silent prayer went heavenward—this time full of thankfulness. A few minutes later, with Dorothy in the car, they headed toward Norwalk and the evening meeting.

Just before they drove onto the freeway, they pulled off to the side of the road and claimed the promise found in Psalms 34:7, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." They offered a word of prayer and headed out on the freeway.

The Sunday traffic was unusually heavy. It was stop-and-go for much of the way. As they drove along, the gasoline smell seemed to be getting stronger. Even with the windows down, the smell was almost unbearable.

Margaret was becoming very uneasy. Trying to strengthen her own courage, she said, "The smell of gasoline must be coming from the little bit that leaked from the loose connection. I'm sure it will go away eventually."

Dorothy agreed somewhat reluctantly. The others made no comment. For a while no one spoke. All were busy with their own thoughts. Was the gas line really fixed? Then how was it the smell was getting stronger?"

Margaret was earnestly pleading with God, "Please don't let anything happen. We're not seeking foolish pleasure. We're seeking more knowledge of Thee. Please take the car to Norwalk and back home again without any trouble. Thank You, Lord."

Margaret felt no definite assurance that

all was going to be well, so as long as the uneasiness remained she persevered in prayer.

As the miles disappeared behind them, and they neared the suburbs of Los Angeles, the heavy traffic made it impossible for Margaret to do more than glance casually at her friend beside her. Dorothy had been a great source of encouragement on many occasions, and she was certainly a big help again, even if she did not do much talking. Part of the time, Margaret noticed, she looked relaxed enough to be enjoying a nap.

But Dorothy had not been resting as comfortably as was supposed. Her thoughts were also on the One Who "stands back of every promise He has made" (Christ's Object Lessons, p. 147). All the while that Margaret was praying for divine help, Dorothy was reminding the Lord of His promise and was asking for deliverance from danger. The fumes were definitely getting stronger. Again she prayed, "Dear Lord, You have promised that Your angels will form a camp around those who fear and obey Thee, to deliver them. We love Thee, Lord, and we know that You love us. We thank You for sending Your angels to keep us safe."

Why all this concern over a problem that supposedly had been taken care of? But then, you know what happens when gasoline comes in contact with a hot engine!

Margaret and Dorothy had real cause for concern. Their olfactory system was relaying a message to their reasoning powers that something was drastically wrong. Instead of the now familiar odor diminishing, it was growing stronger than ever.

All were relieved when they reached their destination. They were all thankful to the One Who "commissions His angels to save His chosen ones from calamity" (Acts of the Apostles, p. 153).

It was a good meeting. The speaker's

confidence and faith in God in the evening message greatly encouraged all who were learning to claim Bible promises. There were smiles and happy comments at the close of the service as the "good-bys" were being said by the departing congregation.

All too soon it was time to begin the long journey homeward. They had almost forgotten about the problem while in the service. Now as they stepped into the car, the smell of gasoline once again reminded them of the situation. Once again they paused and asked God to take care of them on the homeward journey.

They wondered as they sat in the car before driving away, "Should they have the car checked again?" It would be hard to find a service station open now; most of them had closed up already. After some discussion, it was decided that since the attendant had fixed the loose connection, they would consider the problem as having been solved.

Was presumption entering the picture? "Presumption is Satan's counterfeit of faith. Faith claims God's promises, and brings forth fruit in obedience. Presumption also claims the promises, but uses them as Satan did, to excuse transgression" (The Desire of Ages, p. 126).

"God's precious promises are not given to strengthen men in a presumptuous course, or for him to rely upon when he rushes needlessly into danger" (Testimonies, Vol. 3, p. 482).

"There are certain condition upon which we may expect that God will hear and answer our prayers. One of the first of these is that we feel our need of help from Him" (Steps to Christ, p. 95).

Margaret and Dorothy were complying with these conditions. Margaret, as owner and driver of the car, was as helpless as she was

ignorant of mechanical devices. A "typical woman driver" she could only ASK, BELIEVE, and CLAIM the promises God had made.

Margaret searched her own heart to be sure that everything was all right and that God could answer the petitions of her heart. She remembered that in "Steps to Christ", page 95 it says: "When all known wrongs are righted, we may believe that God will answer our petitions." Yes, she was sure that everything was all right in this department.

"He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6).

"There is necessity for diligence in prayer" (Steps to Christ, p. 98).

"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving" (Colossians 4:2).

"When our prayers seem not to be answered, we are to cling to the promise; for the time of answering will surely come, and we shall receive the blessing we need most" (Steps to Christ, p. 95).

Because Margaret and Dorothy had learned all this from the meeting and were obeying these injunctions, they could also say with confidence, "We 'have done as Thou hast said.' We 'present Thy promise, 'Ask, and it shall be given you'" (Christ's Object Lessons, p. 147).

As they committed their way unto the Lord, and trusted also in Him, He fulfilled His promise and did bring it to pass" (Psalms 37:5). The trip back home was uneventful. The angel of the Lord did encamp around them and delivered them from a most dangerous situation, and from what could have become a burning, fiery furnace.

The next day a reliable mechanic checked the motor. Instead of a loose connection there was a definite break in the gas line. Evidently the service station attendant had

broken the line when he tightened the connection. For over eighty miles, gasoline had been spraying out all over the hot engine.

When the repairs were done, Margaret received a certain thrill when she heard the mechanic say,

"Your guardian angel must certainly have been with you last night. You could all have been blown to kingdom come!"

Surely we do have a prayer-hearing God Whose "children are never absent from His mind" (The Desire of Ages, p. 313).

"We may present our petition to the Father, claiming all that He has promised. The honor of His throne is staked for the fulfillment of His word" (Prophets and Kings p. 158).

Note: Margaret was so thrilled with this miracle that she gave me the above account, and we are happy to share it with you in her own words.

## Chapter 16

"I FOUND WHAT I WANTED!"



YOU MAY NOT remember me, but I was attending Milo Academy at the time you were there for a Week of Prayer. That one week meant more to me than any other week of my life. Although I enjoyed the services at the time, I did not realize until much later just how much I would use what I learned during that one week." So wrote Verna Highglow more than two years after the week she referred to.

Her letter of appreciation was brief—only one page—but that one page was packed with a joy that comes from a consciousness of answered prayer.

Verna cited two examples of answered prayer as evidence. One concerned her marriage to a Godly young man; the other was that she had found the Lord Jesus in a very personal way. "I claim Him as my very personal Saviour," she testified.

That same day we received in the mail another letter of appreciation for the good a lady had received from our book, "The A, B,

C's of Bible Prayer". This lady said, "I've been a conscientious Seventh-day Adventist all my life, but I had never learned to accept God at His word in a real, practical way until just recently. I have now received an insight into the science of prayer and my faith has grown. I am so thankful that God has revealed this to me. I want to be used of Him to help many others to understand the things that have so thrilled my own heart."

These two letters came in the mail just in time for me to use them in my Sabbath morning sermon the next day. I entitled my sermon, "I Found What I Wanted." I presented principles, on the basis of which, the authors of the above letters could write in such glowing terms.

I shared with the congregation what I feel are some of the most thrilling passages of Scripture. The first passage I invited the congregation to read with me is found in Numbers 23:19:

"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"

This text precludes forever any double talk on the part of our heavenly Father. It agrees with the statement of our Lord Jesus Himself that "the scripture cannot be broken." John 10:35. It is also in harmony with the inspired statement of the apostle Paul, "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." II Corinthians 1:20.

Joshua, the leader of Israel, made a similar statement to the representatives of all the tribes just before he laid his burdens down. He said, "And ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things

which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof." Joshua 23:14.

I like to call these wonderful scriptures "supporting promises", because they support, or strengthen our faith. They agree with the inspired Psalmist who quotes the Lord as saying, "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips." Psalms 89:34.

These "supporting promises" are not like the proverbial "straws" that the drowning man grasps for. They are "anchors" to the soul. As we drift along over life's sea--if we really are drifting--an anchor will change the picture. It is necessary to keep us steady in the battle and storm, in the fury and anger of the sea.

I well remember, early in my ministry, hearing an elderly preacher inviting our attention to a very important verse of scripture. He said that when God and Abraham were talking together, God first made Abraham a promise. Then God backed up that promise by an oath: "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself." Hebrews 6:13. (Verse 17, margin, "interposed himself by an oath.") Then the preacher went on to read the eighteenth verse, "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."

I can recall as though it were yesterday, the thrill I received when I first took God at His word. The first promise I claimed was I John 1:9 for forgiveness and cleansing. I repeated this verse over and over. It was not until I had been preaching for many years, however, that I let my faith reach out and do something I had never done before. I read

I John 2:25, which says, "And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life." Now when I came to the word "us" I substituted my own name. Now it read, "And this is the promise that he hath promised Glenn Coon, even eternal life."

Next I turned in my Bible to John 3:16 and again inserted my name. Now it read, "For God so loved Glenn Coon, that he gave his only begotten Son, that Glenn Coon believing in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Then I went back and read again the promise of I John 1:9, this time inserting my own name: "If Glenn Coon confesses his sins, he is faithful and just to forgive Glenn Coon his sins, and to cleanse him, Glenn Coon, from all unrighteousness."

I cannot describe the assurance that inserting my own name in these promises gave to me. It did something for this heart of mine! I would recommend that you try this, too, and see what it will do for you. I now use the A, B, C's of receptive prayer as I do this. You remember them, don't you:

A - is Ask, Matthew 7:7. "For any gift He has promised we may ask." —  
Education, p. 258.

B - is Believe, Mark 11:24. "Then we are to believe that we receive." —  
Ibid.

C - is Claim, or receive. John 11:41; I Corinthians 15:57. "And return thanks to God that we have received." —  
Ibid.

Taking the promise of I John 1:9, for example, my prayer would now be something like this:

"Dear Lord, Thou hast promised that if Glenn Coon confesses his sins, Thou art 'faithful and just to forgive' Glenn Coon his 'sins, and to cleanse' me—Glenn Coon—from



all unrighteousness.' So I am ASKING Thee to forgive my sins and to cleanse me from all unrighteousness. And because it is 'impossible for God to lie,' I BELIEVE Thou art forgiving and cleansing me as Thou hast promised. Now I CLAIM, or RECEIVE, this forgiveness and cleansing through the name of Jesus, Amen."

To make the promise still more personal, we recommend to our students that they do as did Augustine's mother. "She laid her finger upon the texts, presenting before God His Own words, and pleaded as only a mother can ... and the Lord gave her the desire of her heart."—Testimonies, Vol. 5, pp. 322, 323.

The books, "The Desire of Ages", and "Steps to Christ" give us the same simple formula for prayer. To help emphasize the importance of the "C", to claim or receive, I read from the book, "The Desire of Ages", p. 200:

"When we have asked for His blessing, we should believe that we receive it, and thank Him that we have received it."

After reading that sentence, I turned to the pastor, who was seated behind me, saying, "Would you please come to the desk?"

So he came up beside me, wondering, I suppose, what was coming next.

"Pastor," I said, "would you look at this sentence and tell us if you notice anything different about the way the word 'have' is printed?"

"The word 'have' is printed in italics," he responded.

"Why is this word printed in italics, Pastor?" I inquired further.

"To lend emphasis to the word," was his quick response.

It is so easy for us often to overlook a most important word in a sentence. This word "have" is italicized so as to give it

more weight in its meaning, and to help us comprehend its great importance.

Then I read this passage from "Steps to Christ", p. 51:

"So we may ask for these blessings, and believe that we receive them, and thank God that we have received them."

Again, the word "have" is italicized. There must be, therefore, a very special reason for our not merely asking, and believing, but also claiming by returning thanks that we HAVE received." "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Hebrews 11:6.

The basis of the Prayer of Reception is found in Mark 11:24: "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."

There is only one way by which we can actually believe, and claim that we have received the answers to our prayers, and that is by asking for the things God has promised. The reason is more, however, than God's truthfulness. It is that: "As surely as the oak is in the acorn, so surely is the gift of God in His promise."—Education, p. 253.

"The gift is in the promise, . . ."—Id. p. 258. As surely as every normal apple seed contains an apple tree trunk, two leaves and roots, so surely does God's Word, which is seed, Luke 8:11, contain the gift. "If we receive the promise, we have the gift."—Id. p. 253.

So, "We must ask for the things that He has promised."—Id. p. 258. Then all the supporting promises can be presented to our Father in the fullest assurance of faith that we have received. Isn't that wonderful? But the most wonderful thing about it all is that it is available to each of us. These promises are given for you and me—and the fulfillment



is for us too! All we have to do is to fulfill the simple conditions to the promises.

Speaking of I John 1:9, our favorite author says, "There is a condition to this promise,—that we pray according to the will of God. But it is the will of God to cleanse us from sin, to make us His children, and to enable us to live a holy life."—Steps to Christ, p. 51.

Notice with me three facts in this quotation which constitute, in part, God's will:

1. It is God's will to cleanse us from sin.
2. It is God's will to make us His children.
3. It is God's will to enable us to live a holy life.

As I have re-read this three-fold statement, I have wondered if, perhaps, I have in the past sometimes complicated the simple act of faith required of us by our Lord for cleansing, acceptance, and a holy life. Notice the emphasis placed on the simplicity of faith: "Through this simple act of believing God, the Holy Spirit has begotten a new life in your heart. You are as a child born into the family of God, and He loves you as He loves His Son."—Id. p. 52.

Now here is a very precious quotation that many have thrilled to when some minister or friend has shared it:

"Do not wait to feel that you are made whole, but say, 'I believe it; it is so, not because I feel it, but because God has promised.'"—Id., p. 51. Isn't that wonderful! How much comfort and assurance that should give us! Repeatedly we have used this thought as we have risen from prayer with some tempted, tried, afflicted but vanquished soul. We have said, "Not because you feel it, but because God has promised, do you believe

He has delivered you?" Some clear their throats. Some hesitate. And a few sheepishly say, "I hope so."

Just recently I visited a lady who sorely needed the Lord. I suggested that we pray the prayer of reception. We reviewed the A, B, C's of Bible prayer. Then we knelt. When it came time for her to pray, instead of praying, "Dear Lord, I believe," she prayed, "Dear Lord, I hope so."

After we rose from our knees, I explained that the word "hope" is a wonderful word in its place, but when it is used as a substitute for faith, it is out of place; for it strikes a note of uncertainty.

The following day I returned and again knelt in prayer with her. This time she started to say, "I hope so," and caught herself mid-sentence. Under her breath I heard her saying to herself, "That's the way I use to say it." She corrected herself and exclaimed, "Lord, I believe it!"

Oh, how happy heaven must have been when she expressed her faith! The difference was in the simple act of believing. By this sincere act—the act of believing—we, too, may be forgiven, cleansed, and become the children of God. He will give us the power to live radiant Christian lives. Isn't this a thrilling prospect!

In the same city lived Jack Brown, a man who very much desired to become a member of the Seventh-day Adventist church. It was thought there was just one thing that prevented his realizing this desire. He was addicted to the cigarette. The pastor invited me to go with him to visit Jack and assist him as he had previously requested.

When we arrived in his home, however, we discovered Jack's problem was more than the cigarette. As we sat in his living room, Jack frankly confessed that he did not even

profess to be a Christian. Now what would you do in this case? Would you talk about tobacco? or would you show him a better way of life and lead him to Jesus?

We would all agree that Jack needed an encounter with Jesus. So we presented to Jack God's plan of saving us all through Jesus Christ. Did not our Lord say: "And I, if I be lifted up . . . will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32).

I explained to Jack that we "all have sinned" (Romans 3:23); and that "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23, first part). But the fact is that Jesus died in our stead and paid the penalty of our sins; and now offers us the "gift" of "eternal life" (Romans 6:23 last part). Now He invites us to come to Him, confessing our sins, and receiving Him as our Saviour. We opened our Bibles to I John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Also to John 1:12: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." We then explained the A, B, C's of the Prayer of Reception. As Jack comprehended the simplicity of this truth, we knelt in prayer.

After the pastor prayed, I led Jack in a prayer of reception by saying a sentence ahead of him, and letting him repeat it after me, as he admitted he did not know how to pray. We Asked; we Believed; and we Claimed and received forgiveness, cleansing and fellowship. He was now a child of God.

The pastor and Jack made a gesture as though they were going to rise from their knees. I deterred them.

"Now Jack," I began, "you have just been forgiven, cleansed, and have become a child of God, haven't you?"

Jack nodded his head in assent.

"You are now a Christian," I added. "Now then, we can ask God to completely deliver you from the tobacco habit before we rise from our knees. We shall claim the promise of John 1:12 for "power" that God, through Christ, will give you complete and instantaneous victory over the tobacco habit."

After we had prayed, Asking, Believing, and Claiming by Receiving, we rose to our feet. Jack was radiant with victory. He knew that God had given him the victory.

We visited Jack three times a day for an entire week. We did this to encourage him to continue the "simple act of believing." Jack was completely delivered and in just two weeks' time he was baptized!

Oh, the power in the simple act of believing and receiving! It is so often neglected and we stand powerless against the onslaughts of the enemy. "Faith is trusting God."—Education, p. 253. It's just that simple. But oh, the rewards for placing our trust and faith in the God of heaven!

It is not enough for us to believe doctrines. It is not sufficient to accept the Sabbath truth, as important as it is. What we want is not merely to be able to trace the events at the beginning and close of the millennium, as satisfying as that is. Even to be able to give a profound study on the twenty-three-hundred-day-prophecy, as commendable as this is, is not, in the fullest sense, bringing the human soul what it wants and needs. I found what I wanted only when I found Jesus. "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart," Jeremiah 29:13.

"Here is where thousands fail: they do not believe that Jesus pardons them personally, individually. They do not take God at His word. It is the privilege of all who comply with the conditions to know for themselves

that pardon is freely extended for every sin."  
—Steps to Christ, p. 52.

What a joy it is to hear the testimonies of those who have taken the Lord at His word and gone on to victory! I suppose it is the greatest joy that can come to a pastor. To see an individual grasp the promises through the power of Jesus; then observe him living a triumphant life by the grace of Christ and becoming a dynamic witness, constitute a "crown of rejoicing" to any minister or youth worker.

"Likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." Luke 15:7.

What a wonderful day it will be, when in heaven we can recount the experiences of life and realize how God has led us. Perhaps our guardian angel will reveal to us how circumstances were shaped so we could understand the miracle of faith. I hope this chapter has been a link in the chain.

May God bless you as you—"Let go, and let God!"

## Chapter 17

### GOD ALWAYS ANSWERS



GOD DID NOT answer my prayer!" exclaimed an earnest Christian after we had finished one of our classes on the Prayer of Reception.

"I have taught as an educator for more than forty years," began a minister of wide experience, "and I know God does not answer every one of my prayers". This statement was made after he heard several of our studies on the topic of "The Prayer of Reception."

"Sometimes God says, 'No'," declared another sincere child of God. And he continued, "I know He says, 'No!'."

These statements are not merely partly wrong, but the atmosphere surrounding them is too negative. I never like to tell people, "God says, 'No!'". I feel that this is likely to give the wrong impression of our kind and loving heavenly Father.

Rather, I like to explain it this way: God answers every sincere prayer of faith, always. He always keeps His promises, always. "The conditions met, the promise is unequivocal."

—Education, p. 258. "We know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him", I John 5:15. "When we have learned to do this (take God at His word and fulfilling the simple conditions), we shall know that our prayers are answered."—The Desire of Ages, p. 200. "Every saint who comes to God with a true heart, and sends his honest petitions to him in faith, will have his prayers answered."—Testimonies, Vol. 1., p. 120. "Your faith must not let go of the promises of God . . . if we could look into his plan, we would clearly see that he knows what is best for us, and that our prayers are answered,"—Id. pp. 120, 121. "I saw that every prayer which is sent up in faith from an honest heart, will be heard of God and answered, . . . and it will often exceed his expectations. Not a prayer of a true saint is lost if sent up in faith, from an honest heart."—Id., p. 121.

With the above statements in mind, we may rest assured that the way to approach our heavenly Father is the way of faith, expectancy, and hope.

There is, however, an important law of God to which we need give study. And this is the law of choice. Every child of God will receive an answer to his sincere prayer of faith in exactly the way he himself would choose, could he, like God, see the end from the beginning. To know that my heavenly Father follows carefully this rule in answering our prayers is, to me, a wonderful solace. I am frank to state that my vision is limited, blurred. I cannot see, as God does, the end from the beginning. Therefore, I make it a practice to pray with this thought in mind, "Dear Father, I know You are giving me exactly what I am asking of You, or something better, much better". This takes, for me at least, the negative atmosphere from my communication with my Lord.

This eliminates the negative, the doubting, the skepticism which Satan would throw around our praying hearts. God is in process of answering every one of my prayers. Yours too, dear honest, faithful child of God. He is not looking down His nose to any trusting, obedient, believing child of His. "The prayer of the upright is his delight." Prov. 15:8.

Many times through the years I have heard a sick saint of God whisper weakly, "I know God can heal me." Sometimes I reply with a kindly expression on my face, something as follows: "Do you also know God wants to heal you?" Then I develop the thought in mind. It is this: If God merely can heal me, but does not want to, then this is worse than as if God could not heal me but wanted to. I would prefer any day for a person to want to aid me, hindered only by his inability, than for a person to be able to do so and deliberately turn me down. I believe that statements like the ones offered by the sick, "I know God could heal me," are often the type which create around us an atmosphere favorable to doubt. I do not believe we should make such remarks.

It would, as I understand it, be much better, were we to say, when desperately ill, something like the following: "I know God wants to heal me. I know He has the physical power to do so. But I do not know whether God can heal me and still do for me that which is best for me personally." Or, "I know God loves me. I am certain of this because of Calvary. So I am confident that God is only interested in my very best good, and the good of my loved ones. I also know that God is doing for me exactly what I myself would choose to have Him do could I, with heavenly vision, see the end of time from its beginning. Therefore, I do not feel it is a question of what God can do or what

ness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" Psalms 107:8.

When Mary, the mother of Jesus, prayed that her son would not die, God answered her prayer. He answered it exactly as Mary herself would have requested, could she have read the whole plan of salvation clearly.

When I stood at the bedside of a fellow-minister, praying that he might be brought back to life, God did not see fit to restore his life that day. However, when I get home to glory I shall understand clearly the details of why God answered my prayer in the way that He did. God could not have done anything else and be a God of love. He could not have brought that fellow-minister back to life. He wanted to. Really. But God saw certain circumstances that my limited sight could not understand. So I was comforted. I never but once remarked to a friend, "God did not answer my prayer." And I was later sorry I made that remark. Why? Because God did answer it. But He answered it the way I would have desired Him to answer it, could I have seen and understood what He saw and knew.

## Chapter 18

### A YOUNG HERO



YOUNG PEOPLE are not merely delighted with the thrills of answered prayer; there are those who are willing to suffer and even die for their Lord. Elder E. L. Cardey, for many years a close friend of our family, shares the following experience.

"The pages of history are filled with accounts of men and women, boys and girls who gladly gave their lives rather than deny God and His truth. Sometimes, however, God uses great accidents and troubles, even where death is involved, to bring the light of truth to others. One day we received in the Bible school in Africa a request for our Bible Lessons from a sixteen-year-old high school boy. He and his entire family belonged to the Dutch Reform Church. He soon became an exceptionally good student and accepted advanced Bible truth as it came to him. When he learned the Sabbath was the seventh day of the week and not Sunday the first day, he wrote that by God's grace, he would keep the true Sabbath. His parents and relatives were

greatly opposed to his doing so and tried to stop him from studying the Bible lessons. Then came a lesson on the true form of baptism. He at once wanted to be baptized. His parents strictly forbade it. He wrote us saying that he would have to wait for baptism until he was of age, but in the meantime he would keep God's Sabbath regardless.

Just a few weeks after this letter came from him, his mother wrote us through her tears and sorrow the following story. The boy's home was only a couple of blocks from the high school, so he rode his bicycle to school and back, and came home for lunch each day. The mother was watching for him one day when she saw him coming, another boy riding with him on the back of his bicycle. She then saw an automobile come down the road toward them. The boys rode their bicycle off the road to avoid the car, but it followed them and hit them while going at high speed. She, with neighbors, rushed to the scene of the accident, but it was too late to do anything. Both boys had been instantly killed. The mother did not know her son had been taking his Bible and Bible school lessons to school with him. When she saw his Bible lying on the grass, she went to pick it up and found it lying open at II Timothy 4. The following words were underlined in ink: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me." Verses 6-9. This last sentence was underscored twice. On her knees there in the grass that mother said: "Yes, Son, I will come. I will

study these lessons and do what God wants me to do". It is remarkable to relate that within another year that boy's parents, his own brothers, sisters, and in-laws had all accepted God's message of Sabbath reform and organized a Sabbath School of over fifteen members with the brother-in-law as the superintendent. The mother wrote us that it was strange to them that this young boy should underscore those verses. It appeared to them to be a message direct from God. If not, why was the Bible lying open at these very verses?"

Thank you, Elder Cardy. And thanks be to God that His power and love are making heroes out of young men and young women all over the world.

## Chapter 19

### THIS IS THE LIFE!



ELDER COON, would you mind going with me Thursday evening to visit a young couple, Sam and Sadie West, who are studying the Bible-in-Hand course?" asked Jim Hogan.

"I'll be glad to," I answered, glad to be of service.

"That's great!" Jim responded. "They are on the verge of making a decision to keep the Sabbath but want a little more information. There's something else I ought to tell you, though, before you agree for sure."

"What's that?" I asked, now a bit curious.

"Well, two ministers of another church are coming over the same evening. These ministers want to show Sam and Sadie West how dangerous the teaching of Seventh-day Adventism is."

I smiled as I said, "That doesn't change my decision one bit. I'll be happy to go."

On the appointed night, Jim and I made our way to the modest cottage where Sam and

Sadie West lived. We were invited in and with real warmth made to feel right at home.

It was not long before another knock was heard at the door, and in walked the two pastors, whom I will call Jones and Smith. Pastor Jones was the spokesman almost from the first.

Scarcely were the pastors seated when Sam started the conversation with a very direct question: "Pastor Jones, is the seventh day the Bible Sabbath or isn't it?"

It was evident that Pastor Jones had not planned on such a straightforward question at the very beginning of the confrontation. Undoubtedly he had had his own plan for the format of conversation that evening. But since Sam had asked a question, some kind of answer was necessary.

The pastor shrugged his shoulder and gave Sam a knowing look as he said, "Sam, the Sabbath is really one of the minor errors taught by the Seventh-day Adventist church. This evening we want to expose some of their more deadly errors."

Then turning to me, Pastor Jones said, "Do you mind if I ask you a personal question?"

"Not at all," I said as I smiled. "Go right ahead." I did not know what he might ask, but I remembered the text that says, "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." I Peter 3:15.

I awaited the question. Pastor Jones fastened his eyes on me, closed them slightly, and with an intense expression asked, "Are you saved?"

How happy I was that he had asked that question, for that very morning I had been reading my Bible and had gone over some texts



that gave me an unquestioned reassurance of the Father's will for me with regard to this very question. Now all I had to do was to share the experience of the morning. With a face that was radiant, I replied with a resounding, "Yes, sir."

The look on the pastor's face indicated that I had not given the answer he had expected. Undoubtedly he had expected me to beat around the bush and try to qualify an answer. He evidently felt that here was fertile ground to expose some of our "more deadly errors."

Pastor Jones was visibly shaken and mumbled a few words and ended by saying, "You are the first Seventh-day Adventist I have ever met who has said he was saved."

While Pastor Jones was searching for words to carry on the conversation, I felt impressed by the Holy Spirit to further develop my affirmative answer.

"I would like to explain why I can say 'I am saved'. This morning when I awakened, I turned to a promise of the Bible which says, 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' I John 1:9. I asked God to forgive my sins this morning. I then believed He had forgiven me just as He promised. Then I returned thanks that He had forgiven me. Then I took the promise just across the page, recorded in I John 2:25 which reads like this: 'And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.'

"I asked God this very morning to give me eternal life, just as He here promises. I told Him I believed He was giving eternal life to me; and then I claimed eternal life by returning thanks that I had received eternal life, just as He promised."

Pastor Jones was listening; so were Sam and Sadie and the other pastor. I continued, "This morning I also claimed the Bible prom-

ise of John 1:12 which says: 'But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.'

"I asked God to make me His son again for today. I believed He was doing it. I claimed it and returned thanks that I had received continued sonship."

"Then I took another promise, this very morning. It was the promise of John 3:16 which promises everlasting life. Again I asked, believed and claimed and returned thanks that I had received everlasting life. This is why I can answer without any doubt that I am saved—right now!"

Pastor Jones did not say a word. He just sat there as I continued.

"Now we Seventh-day Adventists do not go around bragging, 'I am saved'. But we do like to declare the fact that 'Christ is my Saviour!' You see, the first expression puts self in the center. The latter points to our Lord, and makes Him the center."

I developed the thought a little more fully, all the while rejoicing that "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). I was also conscious of the text that says, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (I Corinthians 10:12).

Perhaps fifteen minutes passed before Pastor Jones ventured another question. This time he spoke more kindly.

He asked, "As you sit here in this home tonight, and think of a period of time, let's say ten years from now, can you tonight as you sit here, tell me that ten years from now you will be saved?"

"No, of course not," I replied, "but I can say this: If ten years from now I claim the same promises of my Lord which I claimed

this morning, then I can have the same assurance ten years from now that I have today.

"You see," I continued, "our Lord does not compel the sinner to become a saint." Pastors Jones and Smith nodded assent. "Neither does my Lord compel a saint to remain a saint. But if the saint chooses to remain a saint and claims the promises of our Lord, he can have the same assurance of salvation every day of his life."

Later that evening, as I pondered our visit, I wondered if these pastors had heard some of the same answers to the question of our being saved that I have heard through the years of my ministry. I have heard one answer given more often, perhaps, than any other. It is this: When some one is asked if he is saved, he will answer with a shrug of the shoulder and an obvious lack of conviction, "I hope so." That answer really gives me concern. In fact, it makes me shudder.

Let me explain. Let us suppose my son, Glenn Coon, Jr., is introduced to a stranger one day. Upon learning that his name is Glenn Coon, the man's eyes brighten as he asks, "Say I heard an Elder Glenn Coon preach at the camp-meeting. Would he be your father by any chance?"

Then my son gets a rather sheepish look on his face, shrugs his shoulders in disbelief, and says, "I hope so."

You know, my friend, if word of an incident like that would ever reach us, both his mother and I would be embarrassed and ashamed of our son. It would hurt us, and I think you can understand why.

Now, don't you think our heavenly Father feels a sense of hurt when we find ourselves unable to speak with any measure of conviction with regard to our relationship with Him?

There are those who think it a mark of humility to be in doubt as to their state of

salvation. I submit to you that doubt with regard to salvation has nothing to do with humility. It is my opinion that those who wander around in the maze of doubt and question with regard to this important question have allowed Satan to steal something vital from them. I base my statement on the following quotation:

"Satan is ready to steal away the blessed assurances of God." "It is the privilege of all who comply with the conditions to know for themselves that pardon is freely extended for every sin. Put away the suspicion that God's promises are not meant for you. They are for every repentant transgressor."—Steps to Christ, pp. 53, 52, 53.

The prayer of reception teaches us that we have a right, through Christ, to receive forgiveness, cleansing, assurance, and fellowship. We are given this assurance by the pen of inspiration. Notice these words:

"Every promise in the Word of God furnishes us with subject-matter for prayer, presenting the pledged word of Jehovah as our assurance. Whatever spiritual blessing we need, it is our privilege to claim through Jesus."—Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 76.

It is not my intention to go further into our visit with the two preachers that evening. I met them only on this one occasion, but it served to bring some of these vital things to my mind.

I do believe, beyond any question, that God wants us to be able to declare, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." II Timothy 1:12. God does not want us to merely "hope so". He wants us to "know so".

The Apostle John had a great deal to say about this matter. Notice with me some of

his statements taken from his first epistle that show the assurance we may have in Christ:

"I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father." I John 2:13.

"I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning." Verse 14.

"Ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him." Verse 29.

"But we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him." I John 3:2.

"And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins." Verse 5.

He also says, "Ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." Verse 15.

This helps us to see that it is impossible for any man, while stealing, killing, committing adultery, or any other sin, to say, with any meaning, "I am saved".

There are many more verses in the writings of John which make clear that we have a right—a sacred right—to KNOW our standing before God. Let me cite just one more:

"Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." I John 4:13. We make it a habit to claim a promise of the Holy Spirit every day and sometimes several times a day. I make it a practice also to claim Him before I deliver every sermon from the pulpit, and before I make a missionary visit in the home.

Yes, I believe we have a right to say we KNOW,—right now we KNOW! It is because right now we CHOOSE. It is because right now we CLAIM His promises. God does not want us to give a questioning testimony of His grace or His saving power. He wants it to be clear and uncluttered.

We should always be able to give the world a ringing testimony of our personal Saviour. It is our privilege, with assurance that is born of faith in God's promise, to

exclaim, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: . . . now are we the sons of God . . ." I John 3:1,2.

If you are tempted to question God's willingness to save you, or if you are tempted to think that salvation has too many prerequisites, notice these words:

"The Bible does not teach that the sinner must repent before he can heed the invitation of Christ, 'Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' It is the virtue that goes forth from Christ, that leads to genuine repentance."—Steps to Christ, p. 26.

"Peter made the matter clear in his statement to the Israelites, when he said, 'Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.'" Acts 5:31. We can no more repent without the Spirit of Christ to awaken the conscience than we can be pardoned without Christ.

"Christ is the source of every right impulse. He is the only one that can implant in the heart enmity against sin. Every desire for truth and purity, every conviction of our own sinfulness, is an evidence that His Spirit is moving upon our hearts."—Steps to Christ, p. 26.

Yes, dear friends, salvation can come only from God. He is waiting, longing to give it to us if we will but let Him do it—if we will but cease resisting His working on our hearts. Allow me to repeat these few lines once again. I think they form the basis for a most powerful conviction of truth:

"The sinner may resist this love, may refuse to be drawn to Christ; but if he does not resist, he will be drawn to Jesus; a knowledge of the plan of salvation will lead him to the foot of the cross in repentance

for his sins, which have caused the sufferings of God's dear Son."--Id., p. 27.

Isn't it wonderful to know that we can respond to the call of His Spirit by asking, believing and claiming His wonderful promises? Then we can with sweetest assurance declare:

"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." II Timothy 1:12.

Now, I do not want to be misunderstood. I do not want to give anyone the impression that there is no battle to fight, no struggle in which to engage. On the contrary, we are engaged in a very real struggle. It will continue daily so long as we are on the Lord's side.

Says the Apostle Paul, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Ephesians 6:12. We also fight an unending battle with self. We fight against doubting God's precious promises; against questioning His love, His mercy and His forgiveness. It is a fight of faith. It is a struggle, always whether to yield to, or resist His Spirit's pleadings. There will be no let-up so long as we breathe the breath of life.

Neither would I give you the impression that once one reaches the height of a Mount Carmel experience, he may not soon be under a juniper tree in complete discouragement if he temporarily loses sight of God. Elijah, David, Solomon, Abraham, and other Bible heroes all had fabulous experiences with God, only to utterly fail later tests. Our failures only pinpoint our need to keep on with the A, B, C's of prayer when we have temporarily neglected our communion with God. And

if, when we like Elijah, fail miserably, let us not forget that this man of God was still translated to heaven without seeing death. So can we be: that is, if Jesus comes quickly.

So by ASKING, BELIEVING, and CLAIMING His promises, we may cry out, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." John 17:3. And "I know whom I have believed." II Timothy 1:12.

I challenge you to make your claim--NOW!

## Chapter 20

### THIS CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE



AN INSPIRING picture has been painted on the canvass of my mind. As I share it with you, the readers of this book, I do so with mixed emotions. There is the element of eager certainty, for I am convinced that if I present this picture to you as the Lord has portrayed it to me, it can change any life. There is also the element of fear—a fear lest my inadequacy in using the pen may result in my giving some one the impression that the author of this book thinks he has almost attained unto "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Ephesians 4:13.

It should be borne in mind that there is a vast difference between a firm acceptance of a truth and its full and final realization in ones life.

As regards the picture the author cherishes and the truth he shares, he is forced to admit that he is aware that but its first glimmerings have pierced his spiritual senses. Yet having seen the picture, he feels he would be truant to his trust did he not share

its thrilling prospect with you in this our final chapter. This is a picture of what happened to eleven men—rough, ill-tempered, self-centered, sinful men—within a matter of three short years! And then what CAN happen to you and to me in an equally short period of time.

These men, filled with worldly ambition, eager for personal honor, ready to elbow all others to one side that they might become political favorites, began a special course of study—a course that was destined to change, not merely their lives, but the world picture, within a single generation.

Their experience while enrolled in this course of study appeared so casual that we doubt that any of them actually realized he was a very definite and intricate part of a study class—at least not until after the three-year course was nearly completed.

The subject material, also almost unrealized by them at first, was not a mere topic but a Person—an unlettered, unmarried, poverty-stricken young man. But He was different—different from anyone they had ever met: different in what He did; different in what He said—and how He said it; different in the manner in which He handled problems—of which they themselves were eleven!

His grace in the midst of disgrace: His kindness under abuse; His forgiving spirit under the most grueling, tortuous, blasphemous insult—all attracted their attention and sometimes their disapproval. But still they observed eagerly every word, weighed every action, and then discussed the merits or, as they thought, demerits of all.

Actually, they were non-conformists, so far as their quick, positive approach was concerned. They possibly disapproved, far more than they accepted, most of His methods. It is true that they loved to witness His

healings, as well as His victories over spies sent to entrap Him in His speech. They were thrilled through and through with His tremendous miracles; but they were exceedingly slow to accept His spiritual attitudes and responses.

Then came Gethsemane, judgement, and Calvary in quick succession. Then the resurrection, the forty preascension days, then the upper-room experience and Pentecost! And now for the picture that thrills my soul! It is painted thus by my favorite author: "In mind and character they had become like their Master."—Education, p. 95. What an almost unbelievable transformation!

Then follows a statement of the fruit of such a training: "Then was there such a revelation of the glory of Christ as had never before been witnessed by mortal man."—Ibid. "To every nation under heaven was the gospel carried in a single generation."—Id., p. 96.

This is the picture I wish to share with you; and that, "With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Saviour might be carried to the whole world!"—Id., p. 271. (Emphasis ours.) This training will be one that results in a fulfilled promise: "We shall be like him", too. I John 3:2.

Now with the picture before us, our work is cut out—we are to launch out on a "Christ-centered" program of devotion. We are recommending to all our students that regardless of how heavy a daily program is theirs, nothing is so important as daily personal communion with our Lord. No set of A, B, C's theoretically received by the mind, can substitute for a daily personal encounter with our Lord. Rather, the A, B, C's of prayer are to be combined with this daily hour with God.

The devotional hour, however, will, from

henceforth, be one of personal encounter with a personal Saviour. It will be far more than a mere study of the Bible, even of its great heroes. It will be an hour of fresh personal communings with the Lord; an hour in which the soul cries out repeatedly for more and still more of His likeness. Then throughout the day, before making any decisions, we ask ourselves often, "What would Jesus do?" In other words, our devotion has a double goal: first, that of observing Jesus in His Word, His work and His providence—knowing that by "beholding" we "are changed into the same image", II Corinthians 3:18; and secondly, to reveal Him in our lives to a perishing world.

In another work we have given a detailed report of how a "Modern Mary Magdalene" was changed during an eight-day therapy program. During this time we instructed her to fix her gaze on Jesus. She was to spend at least one hour every day in observing His forgiving love as it changed Mary Magdalene of old, Peter, Saul of Tarsus, David, Manassah, and others. Then she turned to that same loving Saviour with her own need, with: "I ask, I believe, and I claim for myself Your forgiving love. You loved all these others so much that You forgave them and changed them. I KNOW, according to the promise of I John 1:9, You are forgiving me and changing me too!"

We had the blessed privilege of hearing from her own lips the truth: "I've professed Christ for thirty-five years—now I've FOUND Him." Thus in her life there was experienced a partial fulfillment of the statement, "When once the gaze is fixed upon Him, the life finds its center."—Education, p. 297.

Part of our personal encounter with Jesus is found in following His example in claiming "exceeding great and precious promises" so we may "be partakers of the divine nature, having



escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." II Peter 1:4.

In conducting a special Week of Prayer series at a college, we emphasized three outstanding facts:

1. "Satan tempted the first Adam in Eden, and Adam reasoned with the enemy, thus giving him the advantage. Satan exercised his power of hypnotism over Adam and Eve. . . ." —E. G. White, (Letter 159, 1903).

2. "And this hypnotic power he strove to exercise over Christ. But after the word of Scripture was quoted, Satan knew he had no chance of triumphing." —Ibid.

3. That we should now become acquainted with, not merely our weaknesses and needs, but also matching Bible promises. Thus Satan's hypnotic power cannot control us.

"None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict." —The Great Controversy, p. 593.

The eleven men failed miserably because: "The words which they needed to remember were banished from their minds; and when the time of trial came, it found them unprepared." —Id., p. 594.

So with us. "Temptations often appear irresistible because, through neglect of prayer and the study of the Bible, the tempted one cannot readily remember God's promises and meet Satan with the Scripture weapons." —Id. p. 600.

Therefore, we recommend this daily encounter with God and a working out of a format of listing some of the weak spots in our lives. Then against these weaknesses place one or more "matching Bible promises." We have endeavored to prepare our hearts beforehand to meet these "common-to-man" temptations. And we have found that when we have humbly and prayerfully, through the help of the Holy

Spirit, claimed these in a moment of sudden temptation, there is a completely different response on our part to Satan's temptations than there is when we have neglected to use the Bible defenses.

Here are a few of these common human weaknesses with "matching Bible promises", just to illustrate:

<u>Weakness</u>	<u>Matching Bible Promises</u>
1. Retaliatory reaction when criticized.	Rom. 12:21; Ps. 37:5,6; Ps. 66:12; Luke 12:2.
2. When evil thoughts knock at the mind's door.	Matt. 5:8; I John 3:1-3.
3. When tempted on the Sabbath to think secular thoughts.	Exodus 20:8; II Cor. 10:4,5.
4. When facing financial worries.	Matt. 6:33,34; Phil. 4:19; Mal. 3:9-12.

Our lists have, of course, been much longer than the one illustrated above. But these are given with the suggestion that you, the reader, study your own life, asking God to show you your weaknesses, and then, without dwelling long on these weaknesses, search His Word for "matching promises" which promise us Christlikeness and victory. Memorize these "Bible defenses" and practice using them even before temptation strikes. This is something like war maneuvers. Thus the habit will be formed and the defenses of the soul be prepared for the onslaughts of Satan's subtle temptations. This is in harmony with instruction given by our favorite author, who suggests claiming promises when we are, for instance, the victims of "stinging, faultfinding words." In preparation for such a possible occasion, we are to: "Let mind and heart be stored with God's promises." Then,



"If you are ill-treated or wrongfully accused, instead of returning an angry answer, repeat to yourself the precious promises.

"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Romans 12:21.

"Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day." Psalms 37:5,6.

"There is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known." Luke 12:2.

"Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water; but Thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place." Psalms 66:12.—Ministry of Healing, p. 486.

A college teacher, after listening to our study on "matching promises" to offset our weaknesses, was delighted. He exclaimed that never before had this occurred to him in such a striking manner. "Just to think," he said, "that God has so simplified the solutions to life's problems is indeed most encouraging. I now have really found something the Holy Spirit can use to change my life."

A portion of our morning devotions may be used to practice these "war maneuvers". By this we mean we can anticipate the approach of temptation and review the matching texts audibly, or in a whisper, or even only in our minds. We can practice "darting" to heaven short promise-filled prayers.

Often I "dart" a prayer which, so far as words are concerned, is limited to the quoting of a Bible promise. But my soul is ASKING, BELIEVING and CLAIMING. The promise often is, "we shall be like him." I John 3:2. I find this a powerful weapon of the Holy Spirit in any emergency.

At other times I verbalize on the "C"

of the A, B, C prayer. It, however, encompasses the whole idea of the A, B, C's in short.

To illustrate: When I was a boy a visitor or once came to our home, and by invitation dined with us at our table. He used a sort of A, B, C request when he smiled and graciously said, "I thank you for the butter." That man had actually asked, believed, and claimed all in the one expression, "I thank you for the butter." The butter was then passed to him in response to his asking, believing, and claiming it.

Jesus offered this kind of prayer at the grave of Lazarus: "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me." John 11:41. So we also may use our A, B, C's in a variety of ways as we "dart" a promise-filled prayer to heaven. In fact, the biggest part is for faith to actually claim, or receive.

Every now and then people express shock that some apparently very sincere child of God has utterly failed. The manner in which they express this amazement reveals that they do not realize that unless the human instrument is in daily communion with God, he may be like Elijah—one day on miraculous Mount Carmel, but the next night under a juniper tree wishing he might die.

Writes our favorite author: "To the secret place of the Most High, under the shadow of the Almighty, men now and then repair; they abide for a season, and the result is manifest in noble deeds; then their faith fails, the communion is interrupted, and the life-work marred. But the life of Jesus was a life of constant trust, sustained by continual communion; and His service for heaven and earth was without failure or faltering.

"As a man He supplicated the throne of God, till His humanity was charged with a heavenly current that connected humanity with

divinity. Receiving life from God, He imparted life to men."—Education, pp. 80,81.

Now back to our opening picture—a picture of eleven sinful men in a short period of time becoming, through the power of the Holy Spirit, in mind and character like their Master.

I find in my soul a tremendous longing to be like my wonderful Lord. His purity, His peace, His unselfishness and His forgiving love speak to my heart and soul. We know from our study of sacred history that over a span of six thousand years men have been changed into His likeness. We also know this truth from personal observation.

Even a small eight-year-old lassie tapped me on the shoulder one night. As I turned, I looked into an angel-like countenance. She spoke softly and with sweetness and poise in a delightfully confident, yet humble, manner: "Your meetings have changed my life."

By contrast in age there was the seventy-three-year-old grandmother whose daughter's sarcasm nearly drove her to distraction. I heard her personal testimony of a completely changed response as she claimed Isaiah 26:3: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."

Then there is the student who declared: "This prayer class has completely rejuvenated my prayer life. It is the best thing that has ever happened to me! Never before have I prayed as I have since I entered this class. Never again will I pray a 'wishy-washy-maybe-He-will-answer' type of prayer. I have learned that I—even I—can come boldly to the Throne of Grace, claiming definite promises from the Word of God. In them I find mercy and grace needed for any problem that may come. I now believe that my God will hear and answer."

But, most of all, I know from a very personal experience the change in my own life when I have lighted my taper at the altar of heaven. Now with the song writer I can sing:

"I'd rather have Jesus than anything

This world affords today."

Now stand, if you will, upon spiritual tiptoe. See! See a glorious gathering! Hear the songs of rapture! "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? . . . These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Revelation 7:13,14.

Once they were thieves, murderers, adulterers, blasphemers, perhaps, with lives vile and sordid with every imaginable defilement of sin. Or perhaps their lives were filled with the so-called "respectable sins" of pharisaism, pride, and secret envy, etc. But now all is changed through the operation of the Holy Spirit. He has testified of Jesus, and they have "feared the Lord," and "thought upon his name." Of them heaven declares: "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Malachi 3:16,17.

Now here they are "before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple." Revelation 7:15. The "Father's name"—character—is now stamped "in their foreheads"—minds. "And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God." Revelation 14:1, 5.

Soon from the throne will come the fiat: "he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my

reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Revelation 22:11, 12.

Then in that glad hour, how grateful we shall be that we turned our eyes upon Jesus; for by "beholding" we "are changed into the same image." II Corinthians 3:18.

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." Jude 24, 25.